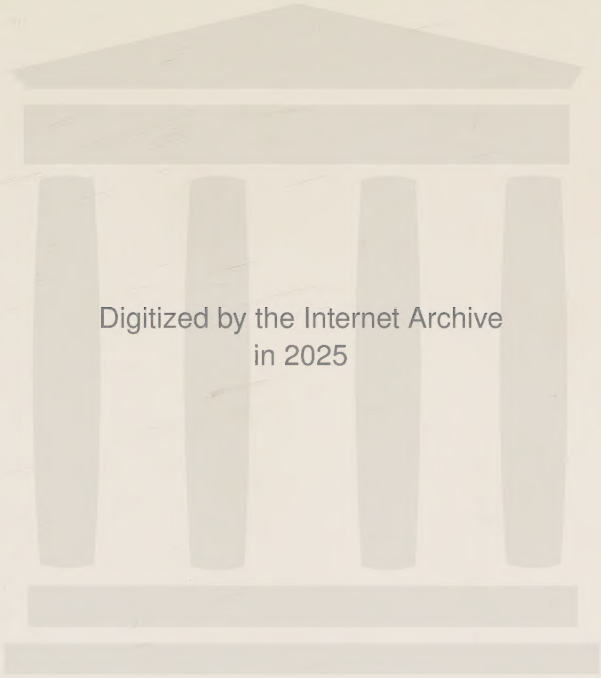
the Pastor

HIS QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES

HEZEKIAH HARVEY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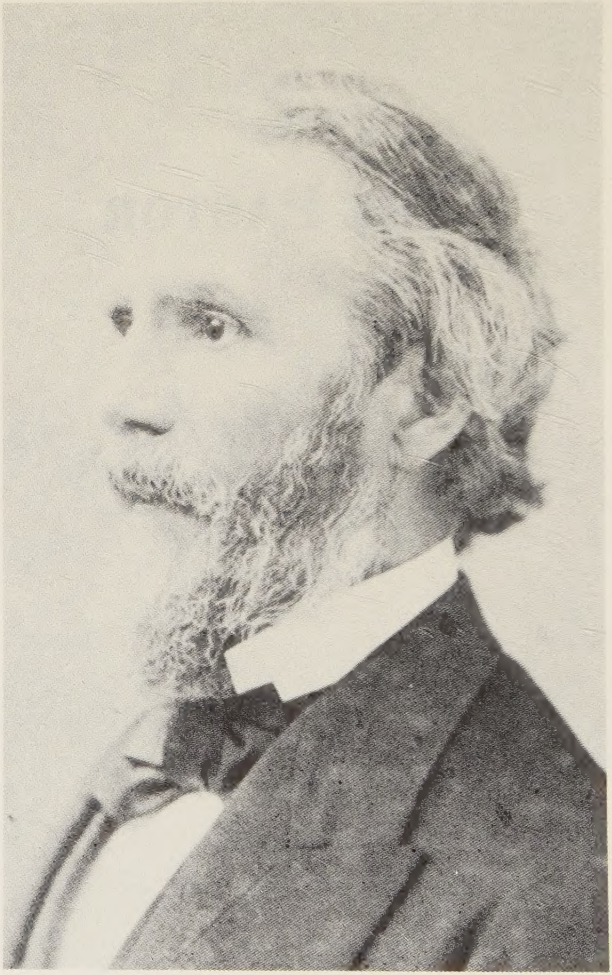
THE PASTOR



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Photographic print from the Archives of the American Baptist Historical Society, Rochester, New York

THE PASTOR:

HIS QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES.

BY

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Backus Book Publishers
P.O. Box 17274
Rochester, N.Y. 14617

Originally published
in 1879 by the
AMERICAN BAPTIST
PUBLICATION SOCIETY
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

1982 Reprint by
BACKUS BOOK
PUBLISHERS
P.O. Box 17274
Rochester, N.Y. 14617

The cover for this book
was designed by
Walter "Bud" Kerr of
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Printed in the United
States of America

PUBLISHER'S FOREWORD.

While a student in seminary, I began to appreciate the great value of the contribution that Baptists have made to Christian literature. With the recent emphasis on reprinting the works of the Puritans, the heritage of our Baptist forefathers has been almost completely eclipsed. I was greatly delighted, therefore, when I discovered that Backus Book Publishers has begun reprinting these works. It is my prayer that through this effort many may find (as I have) the clear, biblical teaching regarding the nature and function of the local church, which is so much lacking these days.

One of those Baptist writers who needs to be heard again in our day is Hezekiah Harvey. Born in Hulven, England, on November 27, 1821, he came to America in 1830, and graduated from Madison University and later from Hamilton Theological Seminary (1847). He then intended to serve as a foreign missionary, but poor health made this inadvisable. After graduation, he became a language tutor at Madison University. Two years later, he assumed the responsibility of pastoring a church in Homer, N.Y. After eight years, he moved on to be the pastor of the First Church in Hamilton. A year later, he resumed his association with Madison University, where he held professorships in Ecclesiastical History, Biblical Criticism and Interpretation, and Pastoral Theology. His six

years of involvement as a professor were followed by a brief term as pastor of a church in Dayton, Ohio. Failing health compelled him to leave the pastorate. The remaining 24 years of his life were spent back at Madison University as professor of Pastoral Theology and New Testament Exegesis.

Through the encouragement of his students, Professor Harvey first put into print his lectures on Pastoral Theology in 1875. Four years later, the lectures were published in their present form under the title THE PASTOR. The rich quality of his lectures bears evidence of a heart and mind that were deeply absorbed in the study of the pastoral epistles penned by the Apostle Paul. Another work that resulted from this study is a commentary on the pastoral epistles and the epistle to Philemon. It comprises a volume in AN AMERICAN COMMENTARY ON THE NEW TESTAMENT, edited by Alvah Hovey. His writings were so well received that many of them were translated into German, Spanish and Chinese.

From this brief sketch, one can easily see that Hezekiah Harvey was well-qualified to write on the subject of the pastorate. THE PASTOR should indeed take its place alongside Charles Bridges' THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY. This work has the distinction of flowing from the pen of a thorough Baptist, and so deals with those issues which are peculiar to a Baptist pastorate. Those who are considering the Christian ministry would be wise to give this volume their careful consideration. May it, in the words of the author, be a means to help many to achieve "a higher effectiveness of the gospel ministry."

Michael T. Major
Pastor, Reformed Baptist Church
Uniontown, Pennsylvania 15401

PREFACE.

THE nature and duties of the pastoral office form a subject of great practical moment. The thoughts suggested in this volume are largely results of the writer's personal experience in the ministry and of his observation of pastoral work in our churches. The literature of the subject, however, has of late become specially rich and valuable, and the hints which a careful study of this furnishes have also been freely used. The experienced pastor, for whom some of these suggestions will be needless, will remember that they were originally embodied in lectures delivered to the classes in the Hamilton Theological Seminary, and prepared for young men who, for the most part, were as yet inexperienced in the pastoral care.

With the earnest prayer and hope that the work may receive the approval of the Master and may contribute, in some humble measure, to the higher effectiveness of the gospel ministry, it is now submitted to the Christian public.

H. H.

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, Hamilton, N. Y.,
Oct. 30, 1879.

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THE PASTOR.

SECTION I.

THE DIVINE CALL TO THE MINISTRY.

A SPECIAL call from God is essential to the exercise of the Christian ministry. Reason itself would suggest that he, as a sovereign, would select his own officers and send his own ambassadors; and the divine call of the ancient prophets, the analogous office in the old dispensation, creates a presumption of such a call in the Christian ministry. None were permitted to intrude into the prophetic office. God said: "The prophet which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, shall die" (Deut. xviii. 20); "Behold, I am against the prophets that steal my words" (Jer. xxiii. 30; see also Isa. vi.; Jer. i. 4–10). The proof of this is seen in the following considerations: 1. Ministers, in the New Testament, are always spoken of as designated by God. This is obviously true of the apostles and of the seventy, but it is seen also in the case of the ministry in general. The elders of Ephesus were set over the flock by the Holy Ghost (Acts xx. 28). Archippus received his ministry "in the Lord" (Col. iv. 17). Paul and Barnabas were separated to their work by the Holy

Ghost (Acts xiii. 2). 2. The ministry constitute a special gift from Christ to the church; for "he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph. iv. 11, 12). The gifts for these offices are bestowed by God, and the men are sent forth to their work by God himself, in answer to the prayers of his people. (See Rom. xii. 6, 7; Luke x. 1, 2.) 3. The nature of the office, as implied in the terms used to designate it, requires a personal divine call. They are called "ambassadors for Christ," speaking in his name; they are "stewards of God," entrusted with the gospel for men.

The ministry, then, is not chosen as a man chooses a profession, consulting his inclination or interest. It is entered in obedience to a special call from God, and the consciousness of this is essential to personal qualification for the work. The emphasis which the Scriptures place on the divine vocation of the minister implies a distinction between a call to the ministry and the ordinary choice of a profession. This distinction, in one important element at least, may perhaps be thus expressed: In the case of the minister the work is one to which the conscience *obliges;* he feels that he *ought* to engage in it, and that he cannot do otherwise without *guilt.* But in the case of one choosing another profession it is a matter of aptitudes, tastes, interest; he feels that it is *right* and *wise* thus to choose, but there is no sense of imperative *obligation*, so that it would be morally *wrong* to do otherwise. In the one, there is the sense of positive obligation as expressed in its strongest form by Paul: "Necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel" (1 Cor. ix. 16); in the other, there is a sense of the rightfulness of the choice made and a con-

sciousness of the divine approbation in making it, but the contrary choice would not necessarily be morally wrong.

As to the manifestation of this call, two opposite errors are to be avoided. On the one hand, the call is conceived as consisting in a mere preference for the work of the ministry, and the result is that men influenced only by literary tastes or unhallowed ambition rush unbidden into the sacred office. On the other, it is regarded as a supernatural manifestation, like a voice from heaven, attended with intense mental struggles; and, as the result, men who ought to enter the ministry are, in the absence of such manifestations, deterred from entering it and mistake their true mission in life. Evidently, this duty is to be ascertained in the same manner as any other duty. The call, indeed, is a divine act, but so also is regeneration; yet in neither case is the manifestation necessarily or ordinarily supernatural. The evidences of it are found in a prayerful examination of one's own experience compared with God's word. Christian young men, therefore, should be urged to ponder carefully the question whether God is not calling them to the ministry. A pastor's utmost wisdom and discrimination should be employed in inspiring and guiding young men to right thinking in regard to their life-mission. Many a life-failure might thus be prevented, and many a noble man whose life otherwise had been devoted to secular pursuits would be saved for effective service in the pulpit. This call, I conceive, is manifested in the heart of the individual, in the convictions of the church, and in the providence of God.

I. The Internal Call.—The elements of this are: 1. *A fixed and earnest desire for the work.* "This is a true saying, if a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work" (1 Tim. iii. 1). There must be desire; for no man will succeed unless the work enlists the whole en-

thusiasm of his being. This is more than a love of declamation, a glow in the work of composition, or a taste for the studious, literary life of a pastor: it is a quenchless enthusiasm for the work as the proclamation of God's message and the means of saving men. It springs from love to Christ and love to the work itself. Paul said: "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts xx. 24). 2. *An abiding impression of duty to preach the gospel.* The apostle Paul said: "Necessity is laid upon me; yea, wo is unto me, if I preach not the gospel" (1 Cor. ix. 16). Not always, indeed, will this inward impulsion to the work be so distinct and imperative, but it will always be felt, and with greatest force as the soul draws nearest to God and the true nature of the ministry is most clearly perceived. Hence, in determining the question of vocation much prayer is necessary, and the convictions which predominate in the soul, when most consciously in God's presence, are to be most carefully considered. 3. *A sense of personal weakness and unworthiness and a heartfelt reliance on divine power.* This, indeed, is not an infallible test, for youth is naturally self-confident, and in the case of some most useful ministers a reliance alone on the divine Arm has come only after long and bitter experience of self-failure. But a self-confident spirit should certainly suggest the fear of self-deception, since it can only spring from a false self-estimate and from wholly inadequate views of the work. Paul said: "Such trust have we through Christ to Godward; not that we are sufficient of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God, who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament" (2 Cor. iii. 4–6).

II. The Call of the Church.—This is the expressed conviction of the church, after sufficient acquaintance with the candidate, that he is called to preach the gospel—a conviction resulting from evidences of his qualifications, such as the following: 1. *Sound conversion.* This qualification is vital and central. A defect here is fatal—fatal to the minister himself as almost certain to result in his living and dying unconverted, and fatal to the people as placing their souls under the guidance of a spiritually-blind, godless pastor. Few positions have in them so many elements of danger as that of an unconverted pastor, since, though officially laboring for the conversion of others, his very office places him beyond the scope of all the ordinary means employed by the churches to lead men to Christ, and furnishes the strongest incentives to yield to self-deception. No man should enter it of whose conversion the church with which he is connected has doubt; regard alike for the soul of the candidate and for the souls of men demands that in respect to this primary qualification the case should be absolutely clear so far as man may judge. 2. *A superior order of piety.* He is to be "an example of the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (1 Tim. iv. 12). He must needs be, in some respects, a model, and must therefore be in advance of the people in experience and life. No brilliancy of intellectual or literary or rhetorical qualification can atone for the absence of a devotional spirit and a pure life in a Christian pastor. 3. *Soundness in the faith.* He is both to "hold fast the form of sound words" (2 Tim. i. 13) and to "speak the things which become sound doctrine" (Tit. ii. 1). A man who is unsettled in his convictions of religious truth, or who palters to the love of novelty by a perpetual straining for that which is strange and startling in doctrine has no rightful place in the pulpit,

however popular his address or large his following. The ultimate result of his work is almost always disastrous to the cause of truth. 4. *Adequate mental capacity and training, and scriptural knowledge.* He is to show himself "approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. ii. 15). As the chief work of a minister is public instruction, it is plain he must possess the mental force and knowledge requisite to make his ministry instructive. Moral and spiritual qualifications cannot be made a substitute for intellectual, for the preacher's work is to unfold and enforce truth in the pulpit as well as to illustrate it in holy living. Piety, therefore, essential as it is, if not accompanied with mental gifts and discipline, is not evidence of a ministerial call. Some good men have made a life-mistake by taking on them the responsibilities of public instructors when deficient either in natural abilities or in the discipline and knowledge which are essential to meet the continuous and exhaustive draft of the pulpit. 5. *Aptness to teach.* God's word is to be committed only "to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. ii. 2)—men "apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves" (2 Tim. ii. 24, 25). Great abilities and learning do not suffice; there must also be the special gift of teaching, the power to gather and interest and hold the people. The ablest sermon fails unless the people are awake and attentive. Paul and Barnabas not only preached the gospel, but they "*so* spake that a great multitude, both of the Jews and also of the Greeks, believed" (Acts xiv. 1). 6. *Practical wisdom and executive ability.* Nowhere are these qualities more important than in a pastor, whose good sense, tact, judgment, power to organize and set at work all the moral forces of his church, are in constant requisition. A large part of a pastor's power depends on the

possession of certain practical qualities; in the absence of these, men of great mental abilities and spiritual worth have failed in the pastorate. 7. *Finally, a good report of them which are without.* A minister cannot escape opposition. If faithful to Christ, he may experience, as thousands have experienced, bitter persecution; but in purity and integrity of personal character he is to "have a good report" (1 Tim. iii. 7), "giving none offence, that the ministry be not blamed" (2 Cor. vi. 3), but "commending" himself "to every man's conscience in the sight of God" (2 Cor. iv. 2). Without this acknowledged purity of spirit and life, his work as a minister is necessarily a failure, for otherwise he cannot keep the consciences of men on his side.

Now, the call of the church is founded on evidence in the candidate of these qualifications, either in their germ and promise where the character is immature, or in their fully-developed form where age and experience have matured the man. This conviction in the mind of the church is ordinarily an essential evidence of a divine call; for plainly, since the individual himself is not the proper judge as to his possession of these qualifications, the church is the natural medium of the call, and its decision ought ordinarily to be accepted as final.

III. The Call of Providence.—Circumstances may absolutely forbid entering the ministry, but it is obvious that all difficulties are not to be interpreted adversely to a call, for such obstacles may be, and often are, simply a discipline educative and preparatory to the highest success in the sacred office. The strength and symmetry of character which have afterward given eminence in the ministry have often been acquired by means of the struggles encountered in the preparation to enter it. But God has distinctly promised direction to those who ask him:

"The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord" (Ps. xxxvii. 23); "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and *it shall be given him*" (James i. 5). To the man of prayer the call of Providence comes in the events of his life, which, as interpreted by the Spirit's guidance, are finger-boards at every turn, saying, "This is the way, walk ye in it."

No man ought to enter the sacred work without this distinct consciousness of a call from God. For, 1. *Without this he obtrudes himself into the office of an ambassador without a commission, and incurs the guilt of presumption.* God has not sent him and has given him no message, and as he stands up to speak in God's name not one of all the promises of God to his accredited servants belongs to him, but he is exposed to all the threatenings against those who speak without command. 2. *Without this also he cannot speak consciously, as an "ambassador for Christ," "in Christ's stead"* (2 Cor. v. 20), *and he of necessity lacks the courage and boldness of him who is conscious of bearing a divine message.* True ministerial boldness in the pulpit depends on this consciousness of being God's servant, bearing God's message; in the absence of this he cannot speak with authority. 3. *Nothing but this consciousness of a divine call is adequate to inspire for the toils of the pastor's office and sustain in its trials.* Disappointments and discouragements come, in which he must fall back for support and comfort on the great primary fact that he is God's servant, specially called to that office and that work; and if this fail him, all the true sources of courage and strength are wanting, and his condition is pitiable indeed. Therefore, as Luther says: "Every minister of God's word should be sure of his calling, that before God and man

he may with a bold conscience glory therein, that he preached the gospel as one that is sent; even as the ambassador of a king glorieth and vaunteth in this, that he cometh not as a private person, but as the king's ambassador."*

SECTION II.

SETTLEMENT IN THE MINISTRY.

I. Choice of a Field.

The choice of a field, especially of the first field, is a matter of much moment, as it is sometimes decisive in its influence on subsequent development and usefulness. A young man, however, should beware of undue anxiety respecting it. A divine call involves not only an appointed work, but also an appointed field of work. The subject should be made, therefore, a special matter of prayer, and the opportunities Providence may open for making the acquaintance of churches should be faithfully improved. The Lord will then direct by the leading alike of his Spirit in the heart and of his providence in external events. Several suggestions, however, may here be important:

1. *Carefully consider the question whether duty does not call to a missionary field.* No one should evade a full, fair consideration of this, for success and comfort in one's life-work depend, not on obtaining what is termed an eligible settlement, but on occupying the post God has assigned us. All parts of the world are now opening to the gospel, and in our own country vast populations are gathering from other lands, sent hither to be evangelized. Evi-

* Luther on *Galatians*, p. 32.

dently, many of the young men now called to the ministry must be designed by the Master for work among the destitute. Eminence among ministerial brethren is a proper object of ambition, but it is a mistake to suppose that the choice of a mission-field, either East or West, will prevent this. A much larger proportion of our foreign missionaries rise to eminence in their work than of ministers at home. The men who are recognized as Christian leaders in the West are mostly men who went there to struggle with the difficulties of a new country and a small salary. By roughing it at the outset they developed manhood and power. Some of the ablest and most eloquent men of this age developed in pulpit power at the West. It is true in the ministry, as everywhere, that he who for Christ's sake will lose his life shall save it. A sacrifice and a struggle for Christ in earlier life give development and momentum to all the elements of power in a man. There is here wide room for a venturesome faith; and nothing is more certain than that many, by seeking at once great things for themselves, dwarf their after-life.

2. *If different fields offer, that is ordinarily to be preferred which affords the highest incentives to exertion and the widest room for expansion.* Few things are more chilling to a young man than to find his church hemmed in, with no possibilities of further growth. This is often the fact in old and decaying communities overcrowded with churches. Seek, therefore, not so much an old church or a large salary as a centre where population is gathering, so that the field will grow with your growth. This was the apostles' plan. They went where the people were, and gave their lives to the work where the largest numbers could be reached. Still, duty may call to a field where these elements do not exist. In that case, do not fear. A man's gift, faithfully used, will make room for him. In

any field it will take time to grow so as to fill it, and the experience will be valuable; and when one has grown to the full measure of his field, and is still advancing in power, other and wider fields will be sure to open before him.

3. *The call should ordinarily be unanimous, at least so far as to ensure that no important influences are opposed to it.* On this account sufficient time, if possible, should be spent with the church to study carefully the elements of which it is composed and form an intelligent judgment of its characteristics and tendencies. Many mistakes might be avoided by care to secure a thorough acquaintance between the candidate and the people before a call is accepted—mistakes which are sometimes most unfortunate alike to the minister, in rendering his pastorate a failure and embarrassing him in forming another relation; and to the church, in hindering their union and weakening their effectiveness.

4. *The salary should be adequate for a comfortable support, and should be fairly proportioned to the pecuniary ability of the congregation.* The minister will be expected to live in a manner at least equal to the average style of life among the people, and the salary should enable him to do so. A "donation," as a part of the payment of ministerial service, is to be avoided if possible. It is perhaps a necessity in some localities from long-established custom; but it is essentially unjust to the minister, because it calls that a gift which is really a debt, and its effect is to foster in the people false ideas of ministerial support. The New Testament declares that "the laborer is worthy of his hire" (Luke x. 7), and it is injurious alike to the self-respect of the pastor and to the respect of the people for his office to make his support a matter of gratuity. It is better, in my judgment, to accept a smaller salary, the payments of which are fixed and regular, than

to insist upon a larger one, a part of which comes in the uncertain form of a "donation." In the matter of salary, however, a true pastor will always tenderly regard the circumstances of his people; and in a congregation composed chiefly of the poor, or in times of financial depression and disaster, he will be ready to suffer with them, cheerfully accepting a smaller stipend and practising a more rigid economy. A selfish, niggardly, parsimonious spirit is nowhere more offensive than in a Christian pastor.

5. *All business arrangements with a church should be made with business definiteness.* It may not, indeed, be necessary or desirable to insist upon a formal written contract, but it would save many a painful misunderstanding if the chief features in the agreement were always in writing. Properly, the call of the church should specifically state the chief points agreed on; but, whether this is done or not, the letter of acceptance should specify them distinctly. The points to be thus specified are: the time at which the pastor will enter on his work, the amount of salary and the times of payment, and the vacation to be allowed. This should ordinarily not be less than four weeks, and should be understood as fully releasing the pastor during that time from all responsibility for the pulpit and from all pastoral service.

6. *The minister, in all his relations with a church, should exhibit a delicate sense of honor.* He may not encourage a call when there is no serious probability of its acceptance. A church call and its declination may gratify a man's vanity and give him a temporary publicity, but such ministerial coquetry is destitute of Christian honor, and in the end reacts disastrously on him who practises it. It is no light thing thus to trifle with a church of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to dishonor the ministerial office before the world.

II. Obligations assumed in becoming a Pastor.

In accepting a call to the pastorate of a church, the following things are understood: 1. That the pastor accepts as scriptural the doctrine and practice of that church, and places himself under obligation to teach and defend them; for this is obviously a chief duty in the office of a pastor. If his convictions do not permit him to uphold the doctrine and practice of the church, he is untrue to himself and to it in accepting the office. And if, while occupying the pastorate, his views of doctrine and practice undergo a change, he is, indeed, entitled to full freedom of personal conviction and action, but he is under obligation to resign his office; for an essential condition on which it was conferred on him has ceased to exist, and every consideration of honor requires him to withdraw from it. It is difficult to conceive a more dishonorable position than that of a pastor who, after having accepted the sacred office of teacher and defender of the doctrine and practice of the gospel, as understood by the church, and having subsequently undergone a change in his own convictions, shall still retain that office only to subvert the doctrines he had placed himself under solemn obligation to defend. 2. It is understood, also, that he accepts the care of the souls of that congregation as a sacred trust from Christ, to devote himself without reserve in labor and prayer for their salvation. The one great work of his life, to which all the faculties of his being are to be consecrated, is the salvation of those souls and the edification and perfection of that church. If he accepts the office for its emoluments, for the literary position it gives him, or as the stepping-stone to some other position; or if he shall, while pastor, allow himself to become absorbed in other interests, so as to divert his

chief energies from this sacred trust in the care of these souls, he is false to the pledge involved in assuming the pastorate, and is guilty of a dishonorable act. 3. It is further understood that he will maintain his post amidst the adversity as well as the prosperity of the church, as the shepherd to whom Christ has entrusted the care of that flock. Our Lord makes fidelity to the flock in danger the test of a good shepherd: "The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is a hireling, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep and fleeth; and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep" (John x. 11, 12). The trials which may meet a church, so far from justifying the pastor in leaving it, may be only an additional evidence of his duty to remain. He may not abandon, in a time of perplexity and danger, the flock the Lord committed to him.

III. Ordination.

Church officers, according to New Testament usage, are chosen from members of the church. No church, therefore, can properly call a Council to ordain until the person to be ordained is a member of it. Hence, the first step, after a contract of settlement, is the transfer of membership.

When the Council is organized the candidate is expected to relate his Christian experience and his call to the ministry, and to submit a statement of his views of Christian doctrine, of church organization and discipline, and of the ordinances. This statement may be either written or unwritten. In any case, it should be clear, orderly, and full. The manner of its presentation should be arranged between the moderator and the candidate. It is usually found expedient to make the statement complete, without interruption, and at its close submit to such

questions as the Council may have noted and may propose, the moderator calling up each topic separately and in order for that purpose. The candidate should also be prepared to submit to the Council, if called for, his license to preach, his certificate of graduation from the seminary, and any other papers that may show his standing and attainments. Those who officiate in the ordination are usually nominated in part by the church and candidate and in part by the Council, but all receive their formal appointment from the Council. For the sermon and such parts of the service as require elaborate preparation, a previous designation perhaps ought ordinarily to be made by the church or the candidate, if the ordination immediately follows the examination. In selecting persons to officiate it is evidently appropriate, as well as desirable, that most of those chosen should be pastors of churches in the vicinity, with whom the person to be ordained will be most nearly connected in his work.

Ordination constitutes one of the chief epochs in a minister's life. It should, therefore, be preceded and attended with much self-examination and prayer, and be marked as a point of new and higher consecration to Christ and his church. The obligations then assumed in the care of souls are the weightiest that can rest on man, and the vows then taken are made not only to man, but also to God.

SECTION III.

PUBLIC WORSHIP.

The interest and value of worship, as conducted in most churches, depend chiefly on the pastor. The ser-

vice is almost wholly led by him. It is, therefore, of the highest moment not only that the sermon be thoroughly studied, but also that his spirit be prepared to lead and elevate the souls of the people in acts of devotion; for instruction is not the only object of the service: it is intended to inspire and lead souls in true, spiritual worship, such as will be acceptable to God and profitable to the people. Three things are here specially to be sought.

1. *Unity of thought.* Each occasion of worship should ordinarily have one leading, pervading, governing thought which shall individualize that occasion and distinguish it from others. By this it is not meant that the subject should always be advertised in the hymns and Scriptures and prayers that precede the sermon; this might be unfortunate, as interfering with the purpose of general worship. But all parts of the service should be consistent with the subject of the discourse, and should flow naturally into it; if possible, nothing should be allowed to enter which may divert from it. The assembly should be dismissed filled with one subject and bearing away one great thought. On this account it is usually better to exclude all other subjects, both during and immediately following public worship, and when a subject out of the usual order is to be presented, such as some benevolent object, to give up the entire service to that and concentrate attention on it.

2. *Sustained interest.* The interest should rise with the progress of the service, and find its highest point at the close; otherwise, the good impressions made in the earlier part are lost in the weariness and apathy of the later. Failure in sustaining interest to the end may result from several causes: (1.) Imperfect preparation, so that the matter of the service is commonplace and uninteresting. In this age of intense mental activity a want of freshness,

vigor, and variety of thought is at once felt by the people, and the attention is lost. (2.) Defective, monotonous delivery, which often destroys the force of the best thought. For this the only remedy is persistent training, taken, if possible, under a good elocutionist; and where such a defect exists, to apply this remedy seems clearly the imperative duty of a man whose success in his work depends on power in public speech. (3.) Wearisome protraction of the exercises. Few sermons hold the interest of a congregation beyond half an hour. The effect of the first thirty minutes is in most cases destroyed by seeking to force attention through another fifteen or twenty. (4.) Too great exhaustion of the physical and nervous force of the preacher before the service in preparing for it. The pastor should secure thorough rest of body and mind before the Lord's Day services, so as to come to them fresh and strong. It is better to leave the sermons unfinished than to fail of this. Preserve at all hazards a high tone of physical vigor and a healthful, elastic nervous organism; otherwise, the speaking will lack force and magnetism, and the most able and elaborate sermon will fall flat and powerless. Some of the most successful preachers avoid all severe study on Saturday, making that a day of rest and recreation, that they may come to their Lord's Day work with full nervous and physical vigor.

3. *Religious impression.* This is the chief design of religious worship, so far as it is intended to influence men; and however much an assembly may be interested in a preacher, the thoughtful and judicious always feel a painful lack if the service has not stirred their deeper religious nature. The pulpit may be able, eloquent, intellectually stimulating; but if it does not touch these inner springs of the soul, it has fatally failed and the great object of public worship has not been secured.

I. Pulpit Decorum.

The spirit and bearing of a pastor in the pulpit have a marked influence on the tone of public worship. If he is devout and reverential, as conscious of being in the house of God and of bearing a message from God, his manner will inspire in the congregation a like reverence for the sacredness of worship. The whole service will receive tone from the spirit of its leader. Here I suggest: 1. A careless manner in the pulpit is to be avoided, either in the posture or movements of the body, or in handling the hymn-book and Bible when preparing for service; as also is the opposite fault of a manner studied and artificial, whose stiffness and formality repel sympathy and give an icy chill to worship. Against both of these faults a devout, reverential heart thoroughly pervaded by the spirit of worship will be the best safeguard. 2. In the pulpit the pastor should be, and should appear to be, absorbed in his work and his message; any act on his part which creates a doubt of this destroys the value of the service to the people, and is to be carefully avoided. Thus, if, before the opening of the service or during its progress, he is listlessly gazing around the congregation as if occupied in mentally commenting on them, or is engaged in conversation with some brother-minister seated with him, the impression is inevitable that the service does not absorb him, and his power with the people is weakened alike in his devotional exercises and in his preaching. 3. As far as possible, all arrangements should be previously made, so as to avoid, during the service, any necessity for consultations with officers of the church; and all notices to be given should be required to be handed in to the pastor before the services begin and should be reduced to the minimum in number and length. For any

diversion of the attention from the service itself is ordinarily an evil.

In all this, however, it is evident that a devout, reverent spirit, thoroughly entering into the true idea of worship, is of far higher moment than any formal rules; for such a spirit will instinctively feel the proprieties of the sacred time and place, and will perpetually seek to realize its own ideal of public service. Cowper has well said:*

> "Would I describe a preacher, such as Paul,
> Were he on earth, would hear, approve, and own,
> Paul should himself direct me. I would trace
> His master-strokes and draw from his design.
> I would express him simple, grave, sincere;
> In doctrine uncorrupt; in language plain,
> And plain in manner; decent, solemn, chaste,
> And natural in gesture; much impressed
> Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,
> And anxious mainly that the flock he feeds
> May feel it too; affectionate in look
> And tender in address, as well becomes
> A messenger of grace to guilty men."

II. The Service of Song.

This is one of the most difficult, as it is one of the most important, parts of public worship. Much diversity exists in the method of conducting it. Whether the singing should be congregational or restricted to a choir; whether, in the former case, it should be led by a choir or by a precentor; whether an instrument should be used or only human voices,—all these questions have been differently answered. My own observation is that the method adopted is of far less importance than the spirit with which the method is pursued. An inferior method carefully and enthusiastically pressed will give better results than the best method poorly followed. In singing, as in preaching,

* *Task*, b. ii.

the men rather than the method determine its effectiveness, and in any church suffering from defective singing I should seek rather to infuse enthusiasm and the spirit of musical culture in the singers than to change hastily any method to which they had become accustomed.

Here, then, I suggest: 1. The pastor should feel and should manifest a hearty sympathy for the singers and an appreciation of their work; the lack of this is a frequent cause of discouragement and disorganization in choirs. He should consult with them in regard to the musical interests of the congregation, should recognize their work as an important service done to Christ and the church, should express, in public and private, his appreciation of whatever is excellent in their performances, and should use his pastoral influence to secure from the congregation the necessary means for such books and instruments as may be important to their success. A good choir, besides contributing the results of long previous training, spend much time each week in practice for the service of the Lord's Day, and no true pastor should fail, or allow his congregation to fail, in an appropriate expression of appreciation of the work thus done. Such a spirit in pastor and people will seldom fail to secure a well-trained and enthusiastic choir, and will make the service of song a power and a blessing in public worship. 2. In the selection of hymns special adaptation to the subject of the sermon is important chiefly in the one which follows it; the others, especially the first, while fittingly leading to the sermon, should be adapted to the purposes of general worship. When the singing is congregational, regard must be had to the tunes as well as to the hymns; for in most congregations the range of tunes in which the people can or will unite is comparatively narrow, and the best hymn will fail with

an impracticable tune. The pastor, therefore, should carefully note the tunes which the congregation readily sing, and make his selection within this range. A few months' observation, with careful noting of results, will enable him to select wisely. 3. Singing in public worship should be devotional. It is not a musical recreation nor an artistic musical display, but an act of worship offered to the Most High. The language of sacred song is often directly addressed to God in praise, thanksgiving, and prayer; it is, therefore, of doubtful propriety to call for singing, while a collection is taken up or business is transacted, merely to occupy the time. Nor should the preacher, during the singing, allow himself to be occupied in conversation, or in the study of his sermon; rather he should, if possible, himself participate devoutly with the congregation in this act of worship, and thus by his example recognize the devotional nature of the service.

III. Reading of the Scriptures.

The reading of the Bible should form a part of public worship, both because it is the fitting recognition of Scripture as the word of God and the church thus presents itself as reverently seeking instruction from him, and because the omission of this would imply that the words of man are of higher moment than the words of God. The Scriptures should have a large and reverent use in the pulpit, as the fountain of all instruction and the sole standard of faith and practice.

1. *The selection.* Here several suggestions may be made: (1.) The passage should be adapted to the purposes of devotion. Thus a selection from Leviticus giving minute regulations in regard to leprosy, or one made from the long genealogical lists of Chronicles, however instructive to the student of the Mosaic system or Jewish history,

might not be the most helpful to devotion in a Christian congregation. The primary end in any selection is instruction adapted to inspire devotion. (2.) The passage should be, in its character and tone, in harmony with the subject of the sermon, but it need not be the passage from which the text is taken. If the text has an extended connection—and an understanding of this is important to the force of the sermon—then this may be selected, unless, as would rarely be the case, it is unfitted to aid devotion. Often, however, a related passage presenting and illustrating the subject of the text may be a wiser selection, and sometimes a devotional passage having no special reference to the text may be of more interest and value. (3.) Some read a selection from both Testaments. In such case the passages selected should harmonize in general teaching and tone. This method has the advantage that, while it reverentially recognizes the Old Testament, it often strikingly presents the harmony between the Old Testament and the New, and thus shows the essential unity of the Bible as in all parts the utterance of the one Spirit. (4.) The length of the passage selected must depend, to some extent, on the subject of it, for it should, at least in some measure, have completeness. The reading service should always occupy such prominence as to show a true reverence for God's word. Any abridgment of it, such as might suggest that the preacher thought his sermon of higher moment, would obviously be unfortunate. The pastor himself, when he knows the ordinary limit for the whole service, can best determine the amount of time to be occupied by this part of it, and especially as he marks the extent of the interest of the congregation in it, for no part of worship should reach the point of weariness.

2. *The reading.* Effective reading of Scripture in the

pulpit is a comparatively rare attainment. Many able preachers fail in this—a failure which probably arises from an undue concentration of interest on the sermon, and consequent want of care in preparing for this service. This, however, is undoubtedly a mistake. A correct expression in reading is the best commentary on Scripture, and is often the most effective way of developing and enforcing truth. No minister should allow himself to fail of power in this. The following remarks may here be of value: (1.) The passage should be carefully studied, so that its true meaning, not only in its general scope, but also in the connection of its separate thoughts, be thoroughly understood. Without this the emphasis will often be misplaced and the truth thus be obscured. (2.) It should be so studied that its thought shall fully permeate the mind of the reader and enlist his sympathy, for only thus will the modulations and tones of his voice give a natural and clear expression of the passage. Without this sympathy a practical elocutionist may indeed develop the thought, but his emphasis and tones will of necessity be artificial, and he must fail to make the thought a power to touch the springs of emotion and conviction in the hearers. (3.) True expression in emphasis and tone will often be attained simply by attending to the above suggestions; but in some instances false habits in reading have become so fixed that only thorough elocutionary drill can break them up. In this case the duty of the young minister is plain: he should take all possible means to remove such an obstruction to his pulpit power.

3. *Comments.* On the question whether the minister should make a running commentary on the passage while reading, there are several points to be considered: (1.) It is doubtful whether such an interjecting of man's

words among the words of God, though elucidating possibly here and there an obscure point, does not on the whole mar the impression of the passage as the word of God, and whether the simple reading of the Bible, with just emphasis and expression, is not more instructive and impressive than a reading thus broken up into fragments by interjected comments. I confess that this doubt grows on me with added observation and experience, and my impression is that in most cases the majesty and power of the Scriptures will be most distinctly presented in a careful reading, without commingling the words of man with the words of God. (2.) Besides, such comments require time, and the practice thus tends to an undue protraction of public worship, seriously interfering with the Sunday-school when, as in many places, it immediately follows the service. (3.) Few men possess the gift for such an exercise. Spurgeon, indeed, has it in an eminent degree, and makes effective use of it. This is true, perhaps, of some others, but most men fail; and if there is a failure, it is here a most serious one. My advice, therefore, is that, unless a minister have special aptitude for it, he should not attempt this form of exposition, but in the public reading of the Scriptures make his best effort to develop and impress God's thoughts in the simple, right reading of them.

IV. Public Prayer.

Public prayer is the worship of the church presented audibly through its representative or leader. The minister gives vocal expression to the devotions of the assembly. But it is more than this. The public prayer not only gives a voice to the devotions of the people: it stimulates the thoughts and desires of the assembly, and gives direction and form to them, so that their hearts are quickened and borne heavenward by the prayer of the leader. It

is here the pastor's heart touches most directly the hearts of the people, and all the spiritual forces of his nature are felt, inspiring, guiding, and helping souls in their approach to God. Power here, therefore, depends, not so much on the observance of any special rules, however judicious, as on a soul habitually living in the Spirit, and thus profoundly realizing spiritual verities and sympathizing with the experiences and necessities of men. A few suggestions, however, may be of value, and we consider—

1. The Form.—It should ordinarily be unwritten. Liturgical forms are to be rejected for several reasons: they have no example in the Scriptures; they did not come into use until the general corruption of worship; they serve to repress and fetter a devotional spirit both in the minister and the people; and they cannot be adapted to the varied, special exigences of the congregation. But prayer, though extemporaneous in form, is not necessarily unpremeditated. The mind should, if possible, be lifted into the sphere of devotion and filled with the subjects of petition by previous reflection. Too often the pastor is anxious only for the sermon, and leaves the prayer, both in matter and form, to the moment of utterance; and an ordinary result is the repetition of solemn commonplaces which fail to inspire and lead the devotions of the congregation.

2. The Matter.—The best materials for prayer are derived from the following sources: (1.) The devotional parts of Scripture, made familiar by constant study. Bible thoughts in Bible imagery are best, because so sacredly linked with the experiences of all Christian hearts. These never grow old, and they afford endless variety and freshness. The mind should be thoroughly imbued with their spirit and stored with their forms of expres-

sion. (2.) Secret prayer, constantly maintained, with a deep and rich personal experience. More than any other exercise, public prayer is the outflow of the minister's inner life. His holiest experiences, gathered on his knees in secret, here find unpremeditated expression, and elevate and enrich and spiritualize the acts of public devotion. (3.) A full, heartfelt sympathy with the life of the people, in their temptations, their sorrows, their hopes, and their dangers. Their pastor's life should touch the life of his people on every side, and his heart beat in perpetual sympathy with them. Only thus can he truly lead them in presenting their hearts' desires before God. The mere recluse whose life is with books and not with men, who deals with ideas and not with experiences, may utter an elegant, and even an eloquent, prayer; but he has no power to inspire and lead souls, in these acts of public devotion, to come with all their needs to the Throne of Grace.

In respect to the matter of prayer, the following cautions are to be observed: Avoid, (1.) Frequent references to self. The minister is the medium of the devotions of the people; whatever, therefore, cannot properly be uttered by the assembly should not, ordinarily, be uttered by the pastor. Any intimations in the prayer respecting the pastor's health or the pressure of his work, intended as an apology for a poor sermon or as deprecating an unfavorable criticism of it, indicate an unmanly weakness which is unworthy of the pulpit and is quickly felt by the discerning. A petition asking divine help for the pastor in his work is indeed one eminently fitting, for in this the assembly may naturally unite; but when associated with an apologetic purpose, looking only to the ear of the people, such a prayer savors of impiety. (2.) Personalities. Cases of deep affliction do indeed occur, which

move the sympathy of a whole community, and in which the person or family specially afflicted may properly be directly alluded to in prayer; and this is true, also, of any cases in which special request has been made for the prayers of God's people. But beyond these limits it is seldom wise to pass. Compliment or criticism in public prayer is especially to be avoided. The temptation to this is often great when another has preached for you; but plainly the time and the place alike make it unbefitting thus to publish the pastor's estimate of a brother-minister's character or sermon. (3.) All admonition or scolding. This, though it is clothed in the language of prayer to God, is, and will be felt to be, intended for the ear of man; and, as in the preceding cases, it is an offensive form of hypocrisy. But in this case there is ordinarily the added element of moral cowardice; for the man utters in prayer to God what he would fear, when looking his people in the face, to speak directly to them. (4.) A didactic, doctrinal method in prayer. This is improper alike in that it assumes the tone of instructing God, and in that it is contrary to the nature of prayer. For prayer is not a sermon; it is the outflowing of religious emotion and desire toward God. It is, indeed, a means of instruction, but it teaches through the medium of the emotional rather than the logical faculties. Prayer, therefore, should never take the logical form, but should ever be an expression, not dominantly of the intellect, but of the heart.

3. The Order.—Order in the topics has many advantages. It concentrates attention on one subject at a time, thus increasing the interest of both minister and people. It aids the memory, thus avoiding the omission of necessary subjects, and leaving the mind unconfused in recalling them. An unarranged, confused prayer, in which the

mind utters at haphazard whatever may first enter it, must always fail of the true ends of public worship. A natural and common order is this: invocation, adoration, thanksgiving, confession, petition, and intercession. Invocation recognizes dependence on the divine Helper, the Holy Spirit, and implores his presence and aid. In adoration the character, perfections, and works of God are celebrated, usually employing largely for this the language and imagery of Scripture, which in variety and beauty has here a wealth simply inexhaustible. Thanksgiving naturally comprehends the whole range of providential mercies which attend our earthly life, personal, local, and national, and also all those spiritual blessings which spring from the gospel in the experiences and hopes of the personal life, and in the associations and helps and prospects of the church of God. Confession presents alike the individual soul, the church as a body, and the community in the attitude of penitence, acknowledging its sins and failures and humbly recognizing the rectitude of the divine judgment. Petition is prayer offered in behalf of our own needs, imploring for the individual soul and for the church, not only providential favors, but also divine illumination, penitence for sin, faith in Christ, victory in temptation, support in trial, growth in all the graces of Christian character, and success in all the efforts of Christian labor. Intercession relates more distinctly to those without us—the families represented in the congregation, the Sunday-school and its work, the afflicted, the unconverted, other Christian congregations in the vicinity, the community with its varied interests, the nation and its rulers, and the great missionary work in its various departments and spheres of effort. Each of these topics furnishes within itself a wide range of subjects for prayer, and the pastor whose soul is in

living sympathy with his people and his work, if he makes proper preparation, may give to this part of worship an endless variety and make it an exercise of immense power. No one order, however, should be invariable, for it leads to sameness of thought and language, and thus has all the disadvantages of a stereotyped form, with none of the advantages of a liturgy. The order, with the selection of leading subjects in it, should be a matter of careful premeditation, so that there may be variety in the general plan of the prayer, while yet there is no omission of necessary topics and no confusion. Within such a general plan of prayer, mentally prearranged, there will still be the amplest scope for those impromptu utterances which the heart or the occasion may suggest.

4. The Manner.—This is not less important than in preaching, and should be carefully considered, for the danger of false habits here is even greater than in the sermon, because in prayer the mind is less disposed to be self-critical. And here: (1.) As to the posture of the body. The Scriptures sanction both standing and kneeling. It should be an attitude of reverence. Ordinarily there should be no gesticulation. The eyes should be closed, the countenance natural and serious. The speaker should remember that all eyes before him are not closed, and any distortion or malexpression of his countenance, however innocent on his part, is sure to be observed and provoke thought and comment. (2.) The language should be simple, devout, and scriptural. All rhetorical flourishes and attempts at eloquence; all terms of endearment and familiarity with God; all accumulation of the divine names in one expression, or use of frequent interjections, as oh! ah! etc.; and all vulgarisms and oddities of expression, are to be carefully avoided; they destroy the spirit of worship. The

vulgar and thoughtless may applaud, but the judicious and prayerful will be grieved; and all such characteristics in prayer weaken the moral power of a minister and lessen his usefulness. Reverence, naturalness, simplicity, are essential in public devotion. (3.) The tone of voice should be the natural expression of supplication. The faults especially to be avoided here are such as these: a boisterous tone, which, while it adds no force to the petition, wearies both minister and hearer; an arrogant, commanding tone, which is suggestive of irreverence; and a whining, complaining tone. These false tones often originate in an unnatural position of the head, which is thrown back, with face turned upward; or forward, with face down, and the organs of the voice are thus injured. Throat disease among ministers is due very largely to the unnatural use of the vocal organs in prayer. Great care should be exercised that the position of the head and the tone of the voice be perfectly natural.

It is obvious that in public prayer a spirit imbued with divine influences is higher than all rules; it instinctively recognizes the true proprieties of prayer; and this, therefore, is chiefly to be sought. Nor do I forget that the mental and spiritual idiosyncrasies of the man must here, as in preaching, largely influence the manner, and may sometimes justify in one what in another would be offensive. But success in this service is so vital to the interest of public worship, while failure is so frequent, that a pastor should exercise constant self-scrutiny, often reviewing his prayers to detect their defects, and often timing them so as to know their length. The young pastor, especially, should select some judicious, confidential friend in his congregation who will faithfully point out defects, and should thus, by a rigid process of self-discipline, secure at the outset of his ministry right habits of prayer. For

then, while body and mind are yet plastic, the power of a false habit may be broken, and the man may be moulded anew; but a few years' persistence will fix the habit beyond possible change, and ensure its weakening, perhaps fatal, power through life.

V. Preaching.

Christ is the one great theme of the pulpit; around this all other themes gather as to their centre and end. Paul said: "We preach Christ crucified" (1 Cor. i. 23). He states the message of the ministry: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you, in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. v. 19–21). All true preaching, therefore, however wide the range of its topics, has a real relation to Christ; and no topic is fit for the pulpit which does not lead to him. The themes of the preacher are essentially the same in all ages, for the human heart, in its depravity and needs, does not change with changing years; and God's remedy, the simple, primitive gospel, remains ever the same. The facts, the doctrines, the duties, the promises, the threatenings, of the Bible are the subjects for the pulpit; none are needed beyond those supplied in God's word. The effective preachers in all ages have adhered to the same great truths; they have differed only in modes of illustrating and applying them. The idiosyncrasies of the preacher and the circumstances of his times necessarily modify the form of presentation, but the subject-matter of the ministerial message is unchangeable.

Sermons.

The gospel furnishes an exhaustless supply of topics. Every minister should, however, use great care to secure copiousness and variety of matter and illustration. The best means are such as these: 1. The constant, careful study of the Bible itself. Its words are the words of God, living and powerful. "They are spirit, and they are life" (John vi. 63); and the pastor who makes this divine book his chief study has a mind filled, not with the feeble, evanescent thoughts of man, but with the quickening, eternal thoughts of God. The difference is world-wide between a sermon filled with God's thoughts and delivered as God's word—a divine message to men—and one which is a philosophical discourse wrought out of the preacher's own mind, and resting its authority on the mere force of human reasoning; and this difference is not simply in the unspeakably greater power of the former to stir and save the souls of the hearers, but also in the ever-increasing power of the preacher in sermon preparation, arising from the absolute inexhaustibleness of the materials for such a sermon. Some able and laborious men early exhaust themselves and fail of richness and power in the pulpit because their sermons are spun out of their own brain rather than from God's word. They draw from the finite instead of the infinite fountain, and the waters necessarily fail. 2. A rich personal religious experience. All hearts are essentially alike, and he will best know other hearts who most truly knows his own. The power of a pastor depends largely on his knowledge of the heart and its experiences under the influences of the gospel. This is more than a knowledge of human nature as delineated in Shakespeare and works of fiction, valuable as this is; it is a knowledge of the human soul

under the power of sin and of the Holy Spirit, as its experiences are delineated in the Bible and in the religious life, and are realized in his own soul. 3. An intimate acquaintance with the religious state of the individuals composing his own congregation in their special tendencies, temptations, and experiences. Almost every religious conversation will suggest new topics of living interest for sermons. 4. Habitual reading of the best religious authors, especially works on theology, exegesis, and experimental religion. 5. A careful preservation of texts, subjects, trains of thought, and illustrations, by noting them down as they occur. These are continually presenting themselves in the social meeting, in pastoral visits, in reading, and in reflection. No man can afford to lose these. They should be preserved to enrich and make effective the work of the pulpit, and so preserved as to be readily utilized; for one may have large accumulations of such materials, but if they are not grouped under appropriate headings and made easily accessible, they may be comparatively useless, because eluding the search at the moment of need.

The subjects of the sermon have been divided into the doctrinal, the experimental, and the practical; but, in preaching, the end is usually best attained by blending these, or rather by presenting each truth in an experimental and practical manner. This division, however, is correct, as made according to the dominant, leading idea of the sermon.

1. *Doctrinal sermons.* Much is said in regard to preaching Christ, and not doctrine. But how is it possible to preach Christ apart from doctrine? Christ is not an abstraction, but a living, personal Being. If, then, we preach him, we must preach his divinity, his humanity, and his mediatorship between God and man. If we

preach what he has done, we must declare his humiliation, his death, and the atonement he has therein made for sin. If we preach him as he is, we must proclaim his enthronement in heaven, his intercession with the Father, and his Headship of the church, with all the laws and ordinances he has instituted for it. And if we preach him as he shall be, we must affirm the final triumph of his gospel, his second coming, the resurrection and the judgment, and the glory to which he will raise his people with himself. It is not possible to preach Christ apart from doctrine; for his incarnation and vicarious death presuppose the fall and depravity and guilt of men, and the need of regeneration, justification, and sanctification; and his resurrection and glorification equally involve the resurrection and glorification of his church. All the doctrines of Scripture thus centre in Christ, and we preach him only as we preach them. Here, therefore, is the true power of the pulpit. Only as the sermon lodges these great truths in the soul is it a living force for the salvation of men. They constitute the sole foundation of genuine experience and practical appeal. A merely hortatory ministry is of necessity a failure, since it lays no basis for experience and Christian life in the convictions of the people. In presenting the doctrines the following cautions should be observed: (1.) Beware of doctrinal one-sidedness. Every mind has its special theological tendencies; there is thus danger of pushing a single truth, or a class of truths, into too great relative prominence. A one-sided and, in its whole impression, a false view of the gospel may in this way be presented. Seek rather to unfold a well-proportioned system of truth, where every doctrine is not only true in itself, but also stands in its just relations, alike of position and prominence, to all other truths. For it is possi-

ble, while preaching nothing but the truth, to put a truth in such false relations as to give it practically all the effect of error. (2.) Avoid, ordinarily, the controversial form in presenting subjects; its tendency is to put the mind of the hearer in an attitude of antagonism. Indeed, a controversial sermon, however well reasoned, will often suggest more doubts than it removes. Doubtless, controversy is sometimes necessary, as in defence of some imperilled truth or principle; but the controversial form, as an ordinary characteristic of preaching, is most seriously to be deprecated. (3.) A dry, formal, metaphysical method is also to be carefully avoided; it is entirely unadapted to a popular assembly. The sermon is not a theological essay; and the preacher, therefore, in dealing with hungry souls, should ever remember, as John Newton suggests, the important distinction between bones and meat.

2. *Experimental Sermons.* Here it is vitally important to make a clear discrimination between the genuine and the spurious in religious experience. The welfare and comfort of souls depend much on this, but it is one of the most delicate and difficult parts of a pastor's work. Experimental preaching is sometimes decried as tending to turn the minds of the people inward upon their own hearts, rather than upward upon Christ, and as thus creating a habit of morbid introspection and weakening the power of Christian hope and Christian life. Undoubtedly, there is a real danger of this where the preaching is predominantly of this character; and a pastor, especially if his own spiritual tendency is intensely subjective, must be on his guard lest he present this side of truth in undue proportion, and thus hinder instead of helping the souls of his charge. But no minister should fail to preach experimental sermons; for nothing is more obvious than the

large place experience has in Scripture, and the urgency and frequency of its exhortations to self-examination. Self-knowledge is of primary moment, and the pulpit should be helpful to this. The presentation of objective truth, apart from the subjective, tends to self-deception and ends in Antinomianism. The Bible is wonderfully rich and full in its delineation of character; and a careful study of these divine pictures of life will greatly aid in the work of skilful discrimination. The Psalms, the Prophets, the Gospels, and the Epistles abound in statements defining true and false experience, discriminating between "the works of the flesh" and "the fruit of the Spirit." Such books also as Edwards on *The Affections*. Fuller on *The Backslider*, Doddridge's *Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*, and Hodge's *Way of Life* are of value, often suggesting important lines of discrimination. Added to these, the study of his own heart and an intimate knowledge of the experience and character of his people will prove eminently helpful to the minister in such sermons. On this I suggest: (1.) The spiritual principles by which the true and false experience may be distinguished should be made clear and distinct. A common fault in such discourses is that they state and insist on certain exercises as characteristic of Christian experience, but do not show why they are so. The hearers are not put in possession of the principle which makes such characteristics essential. Or there is a denunciation of certain exercises as not Christian without developing the principle which demonstrates their spuriousness. (2.) Avoid any attempt to make all experiences fit into the same mould. Religious experience has endless diversity in form, while yet in all persons it has certain well-defined common characteristics. The consciousness and acknowledgment of sin as the one hope of acceptance, the trust of the soul in Christ, the submission

of the will in a complete self-surrender to God, then will appear with greater or less distinctness in all regenerate souls. Thus also in the experiences of the Christian there is endless variety in form, in special doubts and fears, special temptations, special tendencies to sin, special manifestations of self-will, pride, self-righteousness, and self-indulgence; and in like manner faith and love, hope and joy, and every Christian exercise have various forms of manifestation in different souls. Here, then, the point to be emphasized is that, in discriminating between the true and the false in religious experience, the thing of vital moment is the *nature* of the exercise, and not the form or manner of its manifestation. (3.) It seems hardly necessary to add that frequent reference to self, as setting up one's own experience as a standard, is not only in bad taste, but is also of bad tendency as directing from the true standard found alone in God's word.

3. *Practical Sermons.* The symmetry and beauty of Christian character, and the consequent power of Christian life, much depend on the wisdom and fidelity with which the pulpit presents the duties of religion. The New Testament reveals a sublime system of Christian morals which, clearly unfolded and properly pressed, will elevate and ennoble the life of the church. Here the pulpit has one of its widest and noblest fields of effort. The education of the Christian conscience is one of its primary and most imperative functions; for an orthodox creed and a regenerate heart may be very possible where, from lack of moral instruction and culture, the life is sadly defective. The soul is indeed regenerated, but the new life is not developed in the conscience by the enlightening of the moral judgment and the quickening of the moral sensibilities. True ideals of Christian living have not been formed, and the outward character, instead of

being a magnet radiant with the beauty of holiness and attracting men to Christ, is marred by moral blemishes which reproach the gospel and repel men from Christ. The widespread demoralization of late in business life, manifest, too often even among Christian men, in the absence of integrity and of fidelity to trust, should at least suggest the question whether the pulpit has adequately set forth and enforced the morality of the gospel. I suggest the following hints: (1.) In presenting a duty the grounds of its obligation should be clearly unfolded, that the conscience, thus enlightened, may be awakened to full power in pressing its discharge. No permanent obedience will be secured until the conscience distinctly perceives the ground of obligation or the moral principles on which the duty rests; nor does the performance of the duty, apart from this clear recognition of the moral grounds of it, serve to purify and elevate the character. It is the enthronement of an ethical principle within the conscience, and not the mere blind performance of an outward act, which enlarges and ennobles the man. (2.) The motives urged should be evangelical, not legal, drawn from the Christian's relations to Christ, appealing not to fear only or chiefly, but to love. The moral helplessness of a Christian soul, when acting under the impulsion only of legal fear, is vividly portrayed by Paul in the seventh chapter of Romans, where with graphic power he depicts his own fruitless strivings for the good when impelled by the law, and the utter defeat and despair to which he was reduced. Christ alone is the life, and only faith in him brings victory to any soul in the conflict with sin. His character is the grand ideal set before a Christian soul, and his love the impulsive force in seeking to realize it: "The love of Christ constraineth us" (2 Cor. v. 14). A true Christian life is the outflow of grateful, ador-

ing love to him. Motives drawn from the soul's relations to him, therefore, alone move the Christian heart and have permanent power to impel to God and holiness. (3.) Ministerial fidelity doubtless requires a plain presentation of duties and a fearless exposure of sin, but it is seldom wise to employ the style of denunciation. A cheap reputation for boldness and fidelity is sometimes thus obtained among the unthinking, but most men know that at this day denunciation from the pulpit requires no moral courage, and will be likely to regard it as a sensational bid for popularity. True boldness shows itself not so much in the manner as in the matter of the sermon. It consists in exposing clearly and fearlessly popular forms of error and wrong, and applying to them, in all plainness and sincerity, the principles of the gospel. Here, while real boldness in manner should never be wanting, true persuasiveness in manner should always be preserved, thus avoiding needless irritation.

In the selection of subjects I suggest: (1.) The subject should be, as far as possible, adapted to the existing state of the people. This requires an intimate, vital relation between the life of the pastor and the actual living of the people, for the isolated recluse will waste much of his pulpit work on subjects which do not touch the real experiences and life of his hearers. (2.) Every subject should be selected with earnest prayer for divine guidance. God alone knows what are the real needs of those who will hear; and a theme thus chosen is delivered with authority as a message from him, for a sermon is a growth within the preacher's soul, possessing vitality and power as the product of the Holy Spirit; and when thus obtained from God by the inworking of the Spirit, it becomes to the hearers a divine message such as should be borne by "ambassadors for Christ."

Exposition.

This method of preaching has of late years gone into disuse, partly because success in it is really difficult to attain, and partly because, the Bible having ceased to be the chief reading of the churches, the popular interest in exposition has decreased; but when rightly followed it has advantages, both to minister and people, beyond those of any other form of preaching.

Advantages to the Preacher.—It promotes exegetical study and acquaintance with the original Scriptures, the neglect of which is fostered by an exclusively topical method. The process is an ever-enriching one, constantly widening the range of biblical and theological knowledge. It ensures against sameness. Instead of growing stale, the preacher becomes more rich and varied in his range of thought and illustration with every added year. It gives, moreover, familiarity with the forms of Scripture thought and expression, and thus adds simplicity and force in addressing the Christian heart. Above all, it brings the preacher's soul into constant, living communion with the spirit of the Bible, and the study becomes in this way a fountain of religious life ever flowing into his heart, and out of it into the hearts of the people.

Advantages to the Congregation.—It is obvious that such a method of preaching would serve to remove many of the popular doubts and difficulties with the Bible which are at this day so greatly weakening its hold on the masses. It would enable the preacher to put before the people the results of modern historic, archæological, and geographical investigation which have thrown so great light on the Bible and so greatly confirm its truth. Such treatment of the Scriptures in the pulpit would also lead to a dis-

criminating use of them, as well as familiarity with them, among the people. It would necessarily develop the principles of interpretation, and thus educate the people in right methods of using the Bible, making it of far higher value to them. And, more than all, it would accustom Christians to rest their faith, not on the mere dogmas of the pulpit and the creed, but on the very words of God, and would furnish a basis of religious confidence which can never be shaken. The modern pulpit, from its neglect of the Bible, is singularly narrow, exhibiting little of the vast wealth and variety of divine truth. It leaves by far the larger part of the Bible a sealed book. Its types, its poetry, its prophecies, its parables, its presentations, as in the Epistle to the Romans, of the truths of the gospel in their connection as one grand, comprehensive system of salvation—how little of all this wealth of Scripture is presented in the pulpit! The result is, and must necessarily be, the absence of depth and fulness of Christian life in the church and the complaint of a loss of power in the pulpit.

Hints on Method. — 1. The pastor should select for exposition such parts of Scripture as are susceptible of intelligent explanation to a promiscuous congregation. The symbolic visions of Ezekiel and of Revelation might awaken curiosity, but except under extraordinary circumstances could hardly be profitable for such an exercise. 2. Divide the selected portion into sections, each sufficient for a sermon, and as far as possible let each have a single general topic. This secures unity in the discourse. For example, the first chapter of the sermon on the mount might be divided thus:

I. Vs. 1–12. *The beatitudes:* Happiness, its source not external, but internal; not material, but spiritual.

II. Vs. 13–16. *Relation of the disciples to the world:*

Christians God's medium of saving influence and spiritual knowledge among men.

III. Vs. 17–20. *Relation of Christ to the Old Testament:* Christ not the destroyer, but the fulfiller, of the ancient law.

IV. Vs. 21–48. *The law as interpreted by Christ:* Sin, not in the overt act only, but also in the secret thought.

1st example (vs. 21–26): The law of murder.

2d example (vs. 27–32): The law of adultery.

3d example (vs. 33–37): The law respecting oaths.

4th example (vs. 38–48): The law of retaliation.

The first three of the above divisions and the four examples under the fourth would each furnish a fitting passage for a sermon with a single and well-defined general theme. Much of Scripture is susceptible of equally distinct division, so that the preacher will rarely fail of unity in his discourse. 3. Develop the general theme by explaining the several parts of the passage, so as to unfold the special phase of the truth which the Holy Spirit there presents. Take, for example, Rom. v. 1–11. Here, in the progress of the apostle's argument, the general theme is: *The effects of justification by faith in the believer.* These effects are four: (1.) vs. 1, 2, the perfect adjustment of his relation to God. (2.) vs. 3–5, the transmuting of earthly trial into blessing. (3.) vs. 6–10, the absolute certainty of his eternal salvation. (4.) v. 11, a delight in the divine character as God is revealed through Christ in the atonement. The several points made in the passage itself thus constitute the inspired development and illustration of the main theme, and indicate the direction and method of the exposition. 4. Having thus developed the theme by an analysis and exposition of the passage, deduce the inferences as to doctrine and duty, and make a practical application to

the heart and conscience. The inferential development is often very important, as affording manifold and vital applications of truth to character, to Christian experience and life, and to the various forms of error and sin. Nowhere is the value of expository preaching more manifest than in the wide range and the special power of its practical application. 5. Avoid in exposition verbal criticism, parade of learning, allusion to commentators, or reference to different views of the passage; it impairs the interest and weakens the moral effect. The critical apparatus should be carefully used in the study, but it has no place in the pulpit. It is mere scaffolding, which should disappear when the structure is finished. In the sermon the work of the study should appear, not in its processes, but only in its results. The citing of conflicting opinions on a passage will, as a general fact, only perplex the people. Ground your interpretation on thorough and conscientious study, and then present clearly and strongly the results. A doubting manner awakens doubt; and the pulpit, therefore, while avoiding an offensive dogmatism, should be positive in its presentations of God's word. A good expository sermon costs far more labor than any other, but it is also of far higher value to preacher and hearer. Without thorough preparation no one should undertake exposition; for, superficially done, it is sure to fail. But success in this highest form of preaching is an achievement worthy of the preacher's highest effort, and is of unspeakable importance. The mightiest pulpit power of Chrysostom and Augustine, of Luther and Calvin, was in their expository sermons. Chalmers and Andrew Fuller were powerful in exposition; and this form of the sermon is still a chief characteristic of the British pulpit, as illustrated in many of its most illustrious preachers. Dr. William

M. Taylor, of the Broadway Tabernacle, New York, gives one sermon each Lord's Day to exposition, and makes it a blessing and power.

SECTION IV.

SOCIAL DEVOTIONAL MEETINGS.

The practical success of a pastor greatly depends on the effectiveness of the social meetings, yet much tact and constant attention are required in conducting them. The impressions of the sermon here become deeper and often reach definite results in conversion, while here also the gifts and spiritual power of the church find development. The pastor who devotes himself only to the pulpit, and makes this department incidental, whatever he may become as a preacher, is likely to prove a pastoral failure.

I. The Prayer-Meetings.

In reference to these I offer the following suggestions: 1. The pastor himself should ordinarily conduct them if they are general meetings of the church; no other can so fully understand the condition of those present, or so wisely adapt the exercise to their needs. Besides, the instruction and spirit of the prayer-meeting should be kept in harmony with the teaching of the pulpit, so as to supplement it and develop its results; one mind, therefore, should direct and inspire both. Where the meeting is intended for a special class, as for the young people or for the Sunday-school teachers, it may be proper, if there is a suitable leader, for the pastor to be relieved and the care of it to be entrusted to another.

Careful preparation of thought, but especially of spirit,

should be made for the meeting. No man should trust to the inspiration of the occasion either for the thought which shall give the keynote to the meeting or for the quickened spiritual life which, existing in the leader, shall touch and quicken the life of the church. 2. Be punctual in opening and closing at the appointed time; nothing so effectually secures a prompt attendance, and the neglect of it will prevent many from coming, especially females, because they cannot know how late may be the hour of dismission. 3. Be brief in your own exercises, showing yourself a pattern, and insist on brevity in others, whether in prayer, remarks, or singing. Let your opening remarks be suggestive rather than exhaustive, so that when you sit down the people, instead of feeling that all has been said, will find the subject opening before them and be inspired to carry out the thought into other phases and applications. 4. Avoid uniformity and monotony. To secure natural variety, give each meeting its own keynote, now of thanksgiving and praise, now of confession and humiliation, now of Christian hope, and again of some great truth or of some practical duty. If it becomes evident, as it sometimes will, that you have struck the wrong key and thought and feeling are running in another channel, throw yourself heartily into that and make the most of it. If a pause occurs, be ready with a passage of Scripture, a hymn or remark, or call on individuals either to pray or relate experience, or to state some interesting fact you may know they possess. A pastor in vital relations with the people, by his knowledge of the experiences and condition of the individuals before him, will be able to give perpetual variety to the meetings by evoking in various ways their experience and utilizing their power. 5. In regard to the presentation of special cases for prayer, my judgment is that this should be encouraged; since, even

apart from the power of prayer with God in behalf of such cases and the answer of blessing it brings, the special presentation itself serves to give directness and fervency to supplication and adds freshness and power to the exercise. It is possible, however, to have too much machinery in a prayer-meeting, making its movement mechanical and destroying spontaneity. Expression of interest in the subject of personal religion by rising or other forms may be so often repeated as to be worse than useless and become justly offensive. In calling, therefore, for an expression, great care must be taken not to overdo, and not to do it at all unless there is good reason to expect a response. A failure usually chills the interest of a meeting. 6. Use all exertions to bring the gifts of the church into full exercise; there is always a large amount of latent power which it should be the special care of the pastor to develop and make effective for Christ. This will not be done by scolding and complaining, but rather by the diffusion of a spirit, an atmosphere, in the meeting—an all-pervasive, homelike feeling—which will banish embarrassment and draw them out. The timid and backward may also be helped by an occasional question, the answering of which will accustom them to their own voices and induce spontaneous expression. Something also may be done in private personal words of encouragement. Above all, place distinctly before all minds the fact that in the prayer-meeting the main thing, next to prayer, is the interchange of Christian experience, and what is required, therefore, from each one is, not a homily, an exposition, or an exhortation, but a simple statement of what he has thought and felt amidst the experiences of life; and, as every soul has its own peculiar life, it has an experience of real value as helpful and comforting to other lives. 7. Make careful

arrangements for good spirited singing, but usually not more than two or three verses at a time. To secure this, if you do not yourself sing, arrange with one or more good singers to lead whenever a pause occurs. Indeed, if you are a singer, it is often best not to take on yourself the responsibility of leading; the care is too much, and by distracting and exhausting your force it may diminish your power in the general guidance of the exercises. Do not fail to have good books, with hymns and tunes, in sufficient number to give all opportunity to join in the singing. 8. Great care should be taken, if the room is not full, to have the people sit together and near the leader. No meeting will ordinarily be *social*, in any proper sense, where a few people are scattered in a large room. Attention should also be given to the ventilation and temperature of the room; otherwise, the meeting may fail from purely physical causes, in spite of the best efforts of pastor and people. Right physical conditions are simply attempts to conform to God's physical laws, and are absolutely essential to the highest success in social religious meetings; no pastor, therefore, should deem them unworthy of careful and persistent attention. Finally, it should be remembered that it is a *social* meeting. Divest it of all formality, stiffness, or sameness. Make it cheerful, familiar, homelike, as a gathering of God's children in their Father's family. If this is done, old and young will be attracted to it, and will alike feel free to share its services.

II. The Covenant Meeting.

This was originally called the covenant meeting because it was intended for the solemn renewal by the members of their vow of consecration to Christ and the church, and the church covenant was formally read in it while the members stood to express their adhesion to it. Of late

years, however, the meeting is less fully attended than formerly, and the reading of the covenant is often deferred to the opening services of the Lord's Supper, that the church may be more largely represented in the act. The entire omission of its reading, as is sometimes the case, is unfortunate, since many thus enter the church without a full understanding of the obligations thus assumed, and the church fails of the important stimulus to duty which this solemn reading and renewal of the covenant is adapted to furnish. The following hints may here be of value: 1. In a large church it is not possible, nor is it desirable, that all the members should speak at one meeting: any attempt to secure this will ordinarily result either in a wearisome protraction of the service, or in so abbreviating the communication of each as to render the exercise, as an interchange of experience, of very slight value. Some ministers lay special emphasis on the number of speakers they have succeeded in compressing into an hour; but it is evident that if each has not had adequate time to make a true expression of his experience, the usefulness of the exercise is seriously impaired, if not destroyed. It is not the number, but the quality, which gives value to the experiences related in a covenant meeting. As far as possible, however, arrangements should be made that those not called on at one meeting may be called on at the next, and on every occasion the meeting should be thrown open before the close, so as to give any specially-burdened heart opportunity for expression. 2. Encourage frankness and brevity. If members indulge in stereotyped expressions and prosy speeches, break up the habit by pointing out its evil. Many excellent Christians whose experience, if really presented, would prove rich and valuable have no correct idea of what should be spoken, and utter mere commonplaces when they might speak words of gold. Suppose

that, before calling on them to speak, you address them somewhat in this way: "Brethren, we have met to renew our covenant with God and with each other. We want, therefore, to know your *heart-history* since we last met at the Lord's Table—that is, so far as it is proper to be known, for some of it belongs between you and God alone, and should not be spoken here. But you have had experiences which will help and cheer us. Temptations have come to you—something, it may be, separated you from the consciousness of Christ's presence. We want to know how you got back to him. You have had special mercies in deliverance from disease or accident, in prospered fortune, in friends raised up for you. Will you tell how these mercies affected you? You have passed through trial in sickness, in disappointments, in the death of loved ones, in losses and sufferings. We would know how you felt under trials, and how God helped you to bear them. You have had special seasons of communion with Christ, and have received special answers to prayer; you have found some passages of Scripture truth or promise specially opening to you; you have some personal friend or friends for whom you are deeply interested that God may save them. These are the things we want to know—just what your heart has felt of late; and if in this family gathering in our Father's house you will tell these, you will help us and will bring all hearts into sympathy with you." Such suggestions, occasionally made, will repress tendencies to stereotyped thought and expression, and will educe those heart-experiences which give life and power to the meeting. 3. When there are candidates for baptism, encourage them to speak fully and freely, and secure, if possible, that they shall be heard by all. After the experiences have fully come before the church, the candidates should withdraw while their cases are under consideration,

that the investigation of each case may be unembarrassed and full opportunity be had for inquiry or objection. 4. Matters of business and of discipline are, as a rule, to be avoided at the covenant meeting. They usually divert attention from the special object of the exercise, and often dissipate the spiritual impression. 5. Do not protract the service. An hour and a half is usually as long as a profitable interest can be maintained. Too often the benefit of the meeting is wholly lost by its tediousness. A prompt beginning and an equally prompt ending are essential to sustained life in any exercise.

III. The Inquiry Meeting.

The weekly inquiry meeting should constitute a part of the system of pastoral work. It accustoms minister and people to seek and expect immediate results from preaching and Christian labor; and the value of this to both, as an ever-present inspiration, is incalculable. Under every earnest ministry there are always thoughtful, anxious souls; but it requires tact and wisdom to bring them out and come into close, personal contact with them. Few ministers are aware of the extent of this latent conviction among the unconverted under faithful preaching, or realize the importance of systematic, effective means for developing it. Here I suggest: 1. Let the meeting be held, if not on the Lord's Day, as soon after it as practicable, that the impressions made by its services may not have time to wear away. This is a point of great moment. Some pastors hold a meeting for prayer and inquiry immediately after the evening sermon, while the impressions are still vivid and fresh. This has sometimes proved very effective, especially as serving to develop the conviction and make known the persons under it, so that the pastor and church may afterward devote special labor to them. At such a

meeting, however, little more could ordinarily be done, in personal conversation, than a few earnest words and the noting of the address of inquirers, with the view of following up the cases; and this, therefore, would not supersede the necessity of a meeting where more deliberate conversation could be had. 2. Christians should be instructed and urged to bring thoughtful persons to the inquiry meeting—the parent, his child; the Sunday-school teacher, his pupils; the young convert, his friends—and to regard this as a part of regular Christian work. In places where the inquiry meeting is a novelty, its full, effective establishment may require time; but, once thoroughly established, the inquiry room will seldom lack inquirers. 3. Various methods of conducting the meeting are adopted. One method is to meet all the inquirers in one room and converse with them in the presence of each other, as in a Methodist class-meeting. To make this successful, the pastor must have ready tact and large resources, or he will repeat himself and the meeting fail from staleness. But it has this advantage: inquirers in such a gathering are drawn into a disclosure of their anxieties in the presence of others, and this committal of themselves to the subject is sometimes of great value in fixing impressions and leading to a decision. Another method is to meet them singly, or, if specially related to each other, in groups, and let the conversation be private. This, when practicable, is generally more satisfactory, as it gives opportunity to probe the heart more fully, and to say much you cannot so freely say before others. It is often of great value not only to pray with an inquirer, but also to induce him to pray with you. Sometimes, if you have set before him distinctly the way of salvation, he will, in such a season of prayer immediately following, then and there cast himself on Christ and make a full surrender to him. Per-

haps, however, no one method will be adapted to all circumstances, and the judgment of the pastor must be exercised in fixing on one suited to himself and the special exigences of his position. 4. The pastor should be discriminating and faithful in dealing with inquirers, for failure in this may result in a superficial experience and a false hope. In such conversations he should never content himself with a mere, vague exhortation to come to Christ; what the inquirer needs is definite instruction as to what it is to come to Christ. Probe thoroughly, so as to be sure that there is a genuine sense of sin, a reliance alone on the righteousness of Christ, and an actual submission of the will to God. The pastor should prepare himself, therefore, for the exercise with fervent prayer, and gather, and have at ready command, a variety of Scripture passages adapted to different religious conditions, and of simple, clear illustrations of the nature of repentance and faith. 5. Let your conversation with an inquirer ordinarily be confidential, so that he may not feel, when conversing with you, that he is talking to the town; otherwise, you deter many from coming, and even with those who come you may prevent what is so important to your success—a full disclosure of the heart. As a rule, also, it is not wise to encourage an inquirer to seek conversation with many different persons: the varied advice given confuses him and tends to dissipate impressions. Finally, it is obvious that success in this exercise will greatly depend on the tact, geniality, and approachableness of the pastor himself. If he is cold, stiff, and repellent in manner, it will be difficult for him to secure the attendance and confidence of inquiring souls. There may be real and deep religious anxieties, but they remain latent from lack of power in the pastor to develop them.

IV. Meeting for Examination of Candidates for the Church.

No candidate should ordinarily come before the church without a previous examination by the pastor; and notice, therefore, should be given when and where he will meet persons desiring to unite with the church.

Hints.—1. The time should be sufficiently early to give ample opportunity for making inquiries respecting an applicant, where the circumstances and character of the individual are not known. In the case of minors, consult the parents or guardians when practicable; it is a courtesy due to them, whatever their religious character or relations, and is often desirable in order to a full understanding of the character of the candidate. 2. Let the examination be thorough and faithful. The purity of the church, as well as the welfare of the candidate, demands this. It is far easier to arrest an application at this point than after it comes to the church. The absence of knowledge even of the fundamental principles of the Christian religion, on the part of many who are hurried into the church, is one of the alarming features of our times. Certainly, Christian experience is not a matter of mere blind emotion; and we have no ground for supposing its existence apart from distinct convictions respecting God and Christ and the foundation-truths of the gospel. We are "born again by the word of God;" and there can be no "repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" without some definite idea of sin, of repentance, of faith, of God, and of Christ. It is never proper, therefore, to assume the fact of a Christian experience where there is no definite Christian knowledge. The duty in such cases is to instruct, not to baptize. 3. See that the candidate understands not only the general principles of Christianity,

but also the distinctive doctrines and usages of the church and the specific obligations assumed in becoming a church member, so that his profession may be made intelligently. For this purpose have your Articles of Faith and Covenant in printed form, and place a copy in the hands of every candidate. This will often prevent misunderstanding and subsequent difficulty; and the intelligence with which the step is taken will add much to the value of the profession. 4. It is well, when practicable, and especially when any considerable number are to be examined, to associate the officers of the church or some experienced brethren with you in this preliminary examination, that the responsibility may not all fall on you. For this, though informal, is ordinarily the decisive examination; the church very rarely rejects a candidate understood to be approved by the pastor. In some churches, whenever a name is proposed, a committee is appointed to hear the experience of the candidate and make necessary inquiries, and the candidate comes before the church only after their favorable report. This has the disadvantage of making public the name of an applicant and thus embarrassing the rejection, should that be desirable; but it has also the advantage of dividing the responsibility of the examination and relieving the pastor. If a committee is appointed, however, I think it should be a standing one, with the pastor at its head, and the names of candidates should be presented to it before being presented publicly to the church. 5. Beware of an ambition for mere numbers: a small body of well-instructed, earnest disciples is worth far more to the cause of Christ than a heterogeneous multitude undistinguished in spirit and life from the world. Seek in this, not newspaper publicity and laudation, but the approval of Christ, building the temple of God, not with perishable material, "hay, wood, and stub-

ble," but with imperishable, "gold, silver, precious stones," which shall endure when the "fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is."

V. The Officers' Meeting.

The officers of the church are the cabinet of the pastor, and the responsibilities and labors of the spiritual watch-care should be shared with them. A wise use of these assistants will relieve him of many a burden which otherwise he would needlessly bear, and will secure a much more general and effective supervision of the spiritual interests of the church. For no pastor can accomplish all that needs to be done; and if left to the church generally, very little effective watch-care is exercised. Such consultation with the officers will often save the pastor from mistakes, while the division of labor greatly simplifies and relieves his work. It affords, also, a sphere of real usefulness for the deacons, and serves to develop their gifts and augment their religious power.

Hints.—1. Have a regular meeting at convenient intervals—say once a month or once in two months—and let each officer be invited and made to share equally in the counsels and responsibility, thus avoiding jealousies. Prepare thoroughly the business to be brought before them, so that there may be no delay. 2. After the opening season of prayer, read carefully the list of church members, and let each member needing special care be definitely assigned to some one or more of the officers to give at once the necessary attention. By this means any member requiring a kindly suggestion or whose position is not understood may be at once quietly reached; and, if in danger, may be saved before the case has gone so far as to be beyond help. If this is faithfully done, nearly all public discipline may be avoided and the tone of church-life

may be kept high and vigorous. 3. Let the general condition and welfare of the church and plans for Christian labor and church extension be here carefully considered; for here methods for advancing Christ's cause through the church most naturally originate and may be most wisely matured. Great care should be taken, however, that the meeting does not lose its religious tone and degenerate into a mere clique for church management. It may be made, by right guidance, a centre of religious interest and power in the congregation, while to the pastor it secures the hearty confidence and co-operation of the trusted counsellors and leaders of the church.

VI. Church Meetings for Business.

These are properly classed among devotional meetings, because the transaction of church business should always be done in a devotional spirit and be connected with devotional exercises.

Hints.—1. The pastor is, *ex officio*, the presiding officer in all meetings of the church, and should ordinarily preside. Ruling, presiding, is a function distinctly assigned in the New Testament to the pastoral office (1 Thess. v. 12; 1 Tim. iii. 4, 5; Heb. xiii. 17)—a function which would seem clearly to include that of presiding in the assemblies of the body. He should be familiar with the established rules of order in deliberative bodies; but in applying them he should not make a parade of parliamentary rules nor ordinarily put them in the form of law. An easy, quiet, prompt manner in presiding should be carefully cultivated: it makes great difference in the effectiveness and despatch of business and the comfort of the church. 2. Unanimity is to be earnestly sought; but when it cannot be attained it is usual to accept the decision of the majority. The reception of members, however, should

be unanimous—certainly so far as the question relates to Christian character; otherwise, members would enter whom a part of the church do not fellowship. Ordinarily, objections to an applicant may be avoided by proper care in previous inquiries respecting him; but if made, the case should be deferred, and a committee appointed to receive and examine the objections. If the objections are evidently made in a wrong spirit, the church should overrule them, and the objectors, persisting, should be put under discipline. It is evident that the careful pastor, foreseeing such a result, would dissuade, if possible, the applicant from presenting himself, and thus avoid discord in the church, unless this course would inflict injury on the candidate and cover up wrong in the church. 3. Secure, if possible, a full attendance of members, and make the meeting thoroughly religious in its tone and spirit. The contempt into which church disciplinary action sometimes falls is often due to the fact that few members are present, and the moral power, therefore, of the church is not behind their action, and that the manner, if not the spirit, of their proceedings befits rather the secular character of a political gathering than the seriousness and dignity of a church of Christ. Especially should the reception, the discipline, the exclusion of a member, or the election of a deacon or a pastor be an act of solemnity, and, as far as possible, be done by the whole body.

SECTION V.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE ORDINANCES.

The nature of the ordinances, as well as the obligation of them, should be often and carefully explained to the

people. This is the more necessary, since in the popular mind superstitious ideas so largely enter into the conception of them. In doing this, several different methods have been adopted. Some have a preparatory lecture in the course of the week preceding the administration; others preach on the subject either on the previous Lord's Day or just before the ordinance; and others depend mainly on addresses on the occasion. Whatever be the method, instruction should be carefully given, that true views of the ordinances may prevail. For want of this many church members never derive much benefit from these sacred institutions, while some, doubtless, are injured by them.

The principles respecting the ordinances which we, as distinguished from other denominations, hold as biblical should not be ignored or kept in the background. The restoration of these divine symbols to their primitive significance and form is a matter of the highest moment, and the pastor who is silent neglects duty. So far as my observation extends, the spiritual success which has attended the Baptists has always been connected with their fidelity to the mission God has given in respect to his truth concerning the church and the ordinances. The most signal manifestations of the Spirit in our churches, whether at home or abroad, have been made where the great principles Christ has committed to us have been most faithfully proclaimed. But in presenting these controverted subjects, statements should always be made with care. Whatever the provocation, we should be careful to maintain a Christian spirit and uniform courtesy; to be just and candid to those who differ; and to avoid all imputation of evil motives. Indeed, it is usually better to avoid the controversial form in presenting the biblical view of the ordinances, especially at the time of

administration; but if controversy is necessary, let it rather be presented in sermons on other occasions. A distinct course of sermons on the ordinances, carefully prepared, is sometimes of great value for the instruction of the church and the diffusion of right views in the community.

I. Administration of Baptism.

As the act is a symbol, the correctness of its form is essential to the representation of the truth symbolized. The greatest care, therefore, should be used to bring out distinctly the symbol and fix all thought on that; any defect in the administration which mars the symbol is to be deprecated. The vital spiritual fact of regeneration, or a death to sin and the rising to a new life in Christ, is most vividly set forth before men by the impressiveness of the symbol when properly rendered.

Here I suggest: 1. Care should be taken that all necessary arrangements be made for the ordinance, in the preparation of the place for the baptism, and the appointment of judicious committees to attend the candidates. This should be done in ample season, so that there be no haste or confusion at the administration. The pastor should be promptly prepared for the service, using garments appropriate to baptizing, so as to be undisturbed by the water. 2. In administering, be deliberate in movement, leading the candidate slowly into the water with the solemnity becoming so holy an ordinance. Special care should be taken that the water be of such depth as to make the immersion easy and effective. Pronounce the formula reverently, then immerse, taking care that the whole person is covered. Beyond the formula, it is often best to say nothing during the administration; the ordinance itself is speaking to the conscience and the

heart in a voice more eloquent and impressive than human speech. 3. Above all, as you pray for wisdom and power in the right use of *words* to set forth regeneration by the sermon, so ask for wisdom and power in the use of the *symbol* to set forth that vital truth in the ordinance, and that divine Helper whose presence you feel in the pulpit will be equally present with you in the baptismal act.

II. Administration of the Lord's Supper.

In some churches it is customary to preach what is termed "an action sermon," designed to bring vividly before the mind, just previous to the Supper, the events connected with the sufferings and death of our Lord; and it often proves a service of great power and value. With us the ordinance is more commonly preceded by a simple address designed to fix thought upon the great event symbolized. Whatever the method adopted, all subjects should be excluded which may divert the mind from the one great thought of the occasion. The Lord's Table, therefore, is not the place to bring up items of business, or to reprove the church for special derelictions in duty, or even to consider plans for church work. The pastor is often tempted to use it for such purposes, because then the members are more generally together and are alone. But I think it is rarely done without loss, for in this sacred service the Lord designed that the thoughts of every soul should centre on him.

The necessary acts in their order are these: 1. Take the bread, give thanks, break, give to the disciples, pronouncing the words of institution. 2. Take the cup, pouring the wine, give thanks, give to the disciples, pronouncing the words of institution. The service is usually closed with singing, but whether it was originally a part of the

Lord's Supper, or only one of the hymns prescribed in the passover service, we have no means of determining. The question is not important, but a closing hymn is certainly appropriate, and it is better to observe the custom. Observe the scriptural order of the acts carefully, for any deviation will divert attention and is always painful. In prayer avoid forms of expression that may convey false ideas of the ordinances. Thus, we sometimes hear: "Bless so much of this bread," or "so much of this wine," "as may be used," as if blessing made a change in the elements, and the administrator feared too much would be changed and the blessed elements might thus be wasted. Such phrases, which have come down from the ages of superstition, are adapted to foster among the people false ideas of the ordinance. Do not talk much during the administration, but leave silent moments in which each heart may commune with itself and with Christ. Too much talking is the common fault. When God is speaking through the symbol, let man keep silence. This will be the more obvious if we remember that the ordinance consists of two essential parts—the presentation of the symbols of Christ's body and blood by the administration, and the act of partaking as the symbol of an inward act of faith on the part of the partaker. If the attention, therefore, is held by remarks of the administrator, the value of the ordinance may be lost to the participant from lack of opportunity for silent communion between his soul and Christ. Above all, enter yourself as fully as possible into the great idea of the ordinance, and use all means to fix thought on that to the exclusion of all else. Rightly administered, the Lord's Supper is one of the mightiest forces God has given to inspire and purify the heart and elevate the life of the church.

SECTION VI.

THE PASTOR AND THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

No pastor can be permanently successful if not in sympathy with the young. He must be the pastor of the children, accessible and attractive to youth, and must give a cordial recognition and a kindly word as he meets them. As an aid in this, make a register of their names and a careful study of their faces, so as readily to recognize them; and carry with you cards with Scripture mottoes or other little souvenirs of a pastor's love and interest to leave with them. The most successful ministers of the present age are, as a rule, active Sunday-school workers. Of several eminent pastors it was written some years ago: "The venerable Dr. Tyng, as is well known, attributes his great success largely to his long-continued and unwearied personal attention to his Sunday-school. He is never absent from his home school. Rev. S. H. Tyng, Jr., uniformly conducts the closing exercises of his home school, and also the Friday-evening meetings of the teachers of all his four schools, thus by indirection reaching the twelve hundred children who in turn are taught by these teachers. Dr. Howard Crosby takes up the lesson on Wednesday evening, and preaches regularly to the children on Sunday afternoons. Dr. Richard Newton, who has an almost world-wide reputation as a children's preacher, takes up the Sunday-school lesson at his weekly service, attends his teachers' meeting, and preaches regularly to the children of the parish. Dr. John Hall goes each Sunday morning into his home school, and, believing in 'hand-shaking as a means of grace,' takes each teacher and scholar cordially by the hand. He lectures each Wednesday evening on the Sunday-school lesson to a well-

filled church, the audience having long since outgrown the lecture-room. He conducts in person a monthly review in his home school, questioning each class on the lessons of the preceding month. He presides at the monthly or bi-monthly sociable of the teachers of his four schools, and conducts on Saturday afternoon a ladies' Bible class which the lecture-room is too small comfortably to hold." These are, indeed, rare men, but they show the wonderful power that pastors may wield by sympathy with the young, and by wisely-directed Bible study among them. Indeed, the preparation of a Sunday-school sermon, by compelling simplicity of statement and aptness of illustration, is a valuable discipline for the preparation of ordinary services.

Hints.—1. In public address or prayer let your appreciation of the Sunday-school as a sphere of church work and religious power be always manifest. Make it prominent among the subjects of prayer both in the pulpit and in the prayer-room. Exhort and instruct the church respecting the necessity of securing for it cheerful, attractive rooms and an ample apparatus in music, library, papers, maps, etc. The interest and liberality of a congregation in this depend greatly on the interest manifested in the pulpit. 2. Use careful effort to form the adult members of the congregation into Bible classes, and thus connect them personally with the school. This can be done to a much larger extent than is supposed, and the results are of the highest value. It enlarges the biblical knowledge and enriches the experience of the adult part of the church. It brings to the school the moral support and influence of this class. It is a means of holding the young as they become men and women, and preventing their abandonment of the school as having become too old for it. And it secures a permanent, living sympathy

between the church and the school, thus avoiding that isolation of the school which, in many instances, makes it practically a separate interest outside of the church rather than within it. 3. The pastor should let his presence and personal influence be constantly felt in the school; but if he have two sermons on the Lord's Day, he should neither superintend it nor, if possible to avoid, consent to take a class in it. It will exhaust him often before the second sermon, and in the end may destroy his nervous power. But he should be often present in the school, talk to it occasionally, and make the personal acquaintance of teachers and scholars, moving among them as a friend and helper. 4. The pastor should, if possible, meet the teachers weekly for instruction and counsel, carefully studying with them the lesson for the Lord's Day. The teachers' meeting will afford opportunity for the consideration, not of the lesson only, but also of all the interests of the school. As a preparation for this he should make himself familiar with the best methods of Sunday-school work, that he may wisely inspire and direct improvement. Or if it be thought that the helps for the study of the lesson given in papers accessible to the teachers are sufficient, the pastor's instruction in the teachers' meeting might take a wider range, embracing courses of lectures on the Christian Evidences, the Introduction to the Books of the Bible, the Scripture Doctrines, Sacred Geography, and kindred subjects. In this case the sphere of the meeting might be enlarged, making it also a normal class, in which the more advanced scholars, as well as the teachers, might be prepared for the teacher's work. 5. Great care is to be exercised respecting the books introduced into the library; for, while much advance has been made in the style and adaptation of books for the young, there are many which are not merely

trashy, but are positively pernicious. The Sunday-school library is an instrument of great power in forming the tastes, the opinions, and the habits of the people, and it is of the utmost moment that the books be pure in doctrine and healthful in moral and religious tone. 6. The Sunday-school concert, in which the exercises are prepared chiefly by the school itself, will be of great value if wisely conducted; but care is needed to exclude exercises introduced for sensational effect which may not befit the Lord's Day. Indeed, it is all-important that the exercise should not be degraded into a mere exhibition, awakening on the part of teachers and scholars only a desire to produce a popular sensation and draw the crowd, and on the part of the people a desire to be amused. The devotional spirit should always be dominant. But in addition to such exercises, it will be profitable to preach a sermon statedly—once a month, or at least once in three months—expressly to the Sunday-school, adapting the whole service to the young. It brings the pastor and school together publicly and directly, and recognizes the relation of the pastor to it as its chief instructor and guide. But in the sermon, as in every Sunday-school address, he should be careful that in attempting to be simple he does not become childish; the former is necessary to success, the latter is a common and fatal mistake.

Finally, the hearty co-operation and sympathy, above suggested, of pastor and people with the school will ordinarily avert all difficulty on the question of the relation of the Sunday-school to the church; for any school, whether home or mission, which finds itself thus enclosed within the living sympathies of the church will instinctively recognize its position as belonging to the church and under its watch-care and guidance. Nor will the other evil, so widespread and unfortunate, of the non-attendance

of the school on public worship be likely to be experienced; for the scholars, won by the pastor's personal interest in them, will be attracted to him and to his ministrations in the pulpit.

SECTION VII.

PASTORAL VISITATION.

The care of souls is the radical idea of the pastor's office. He is a shepherd to whom a flock has been committed to guide, to feed, to defend; and the divine command enjoins: "Take heed to *all* the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers" (Acts xx. 28). He is to be the personal religious guide, the confidential Christian friend, of his charge. Our Lord, in his description of the Good Shepherd, said: "The sheep hear his voice; and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice" (John x. 3, 4). Each member of his flock is a soul entrusted to his care by the Lord; and if true to his trust, he is one of those who "watch for souls as they that must give account." Paul, when in Ephesus, taught not only publicly, but "from house to house;" and in his farewell charge to the elders of that city he said: "Watch, and remember that, by the space of three years, I ceased not to warn every man night and day with tears" (Acts xx. 31). Dr. Cuyler, one of the busiest and most effective pastors in Brooklyn, says: "Young brethren, aim from the start to be thorough pastors. During the week go to those whom you expect to come to you on the Lord's Day. In the morning of each day study books; in the

afternoon study door-plates and *human nature.* Your people will give you material for your best practical sermons. After an effective Sunday work go around among your flock, as Napoleon rode over the field after a battle—to see where the shot struck and who were among the wounded."

Dr. Taylor, of the Broadway Tabernacle, New York, addressing theological students, says: "You will make a great mistake if you undervalue the visitation of your people. The pulpit is your throne, no doubt; but then a throne is stable as it rests on the affections of the people, and to get their affections you must visit them in their dwellings. I used to look upon my visitation as a dreadful drudgery, but it has now become my joy, so that whenever I am tempted to despond I sally forth to visit my flock; and as I look back upon those early years in which I had no such gladness, I am earnestly desirous to save you from blundering as I did."

Dr. John Hall, of New York, speaking to a similar audience, said: "Pains should be taken that nothing prevents your making pastoral visits. It is very necessary for you to know the people in their homes, and for the people to know you. The little children and the young people should know you. The men should know you. It is only in this way that you can get a distinct idea of the wants of your people, and so be enabled to adapt your preaching to them. Do not begrudge the time thus spent. In freely conversing with humble people you will get side-lights, or particular testimony, that will make you a stronger man and a better minister for many a day to come."

Bishop Simpson, alluding to the timidity often felt by young men in regard to pastoral visitation, gives this bit of experience: "I had much of this timidity when I

entered the ministry. The palms of my hands sometimes burned at the very thought of going out to visit. But I felt I must go; the church bade me go; I had promised God I would go; and as the soldier in the army walks forward timidly, yet determinedly, into the thickest of the fight, so I went in my Master's name. If I could, I took with me some experienced Christian friend. I spoke to the people kindly; drew out of them their religious condition and experience; found many a wandering one, and tried to comfort many a sorrowing heart. Such visits made me better, taught me to feel for the people, and to break for them the bread of life with more fitness. In a revival which followed, out of nearly three hundred who came to the altar for prayer there were very few with whom I had not previously conversed, and I knew how to enter into their sympathies and to point them to the Lamb of God."

The late eminent President Francis Wayland, in closing an earnest plea to pastors on this subject, said: "If, at last, it be said that all this is beneath the dignity of our profession, and that we cannot expect an educated man to spend his time in visiting mechanics in their shops and in sitting down with women engaged in their domestic labor to converse with them on the subject of religion, to this objection I have no reply to offer. Let the objector present his case in its full force to him who, on his journey to Galilee, 'sat thus on the well' and held a memorable conversation with a woman of Samaria."

Pastoral visitation, therefore—this personal care of souls—is an essential part of the pastor's work; and no minister meets the responsibilities of the sacred office who neglects direct individual religious contact with his flock. For the performance of this duty, however, it is obvious no rules of universal application can

be given. Men differ in their characteristics and modes of working, and each pastor will ordinarily succeed best with his own method. Churches differ in their circumstances and modes of life, and a method adapted to one field may not be at all feasible in another. The main points here to be kept in view are that the pastor in some way come into personal religious relations with his flock, and that this be done by a fixed plan. The suggestions made, therefore, will be of only a general character, and will relate to the limits of this duty, the method of performing it, and the advantages of its faithful discharge.

I. Its Limits.

In the pastor's plan of work, how large a place should be given to pastoral visitation?

The pulpit, without doubt, has the highest claim. The pastor is there surrounded by his whole flock, and stands forth before the world as God's ambassador, the accredited expositor and defender of the gospel. No private duty can rise to the dignity and responsibility of this great public work, and no plea of pastoral exigences or pastoral usefulness can excuse an habitual neglect of thorough preparation for the sacred desk. This is primary and essential.

But in the pastor's plan he should also aim to secure the visitation of every family and, as far as possible, every person in his congregation. In most churches this could be done at least as often as once a year; in some, doubtless, more frequently than this. By employing system, laying out the work carefully, and rigidly devoting fixed seasons for its prosecution, a large congregation can be readily visited. Suppose that, in addition to those made in cases of sickness and special

urgency, six visits in regular course are made every week, even this, small as the number is, in half a year would reach more than a hundred and fifty families—a number above the average of households in our congregations. For this two or three afternoons each week would ordinarily be ample, and the pastor, by thus placing himself in living sympathy with the life of his people, would gain far more than that for his study by the increased facility with which his sermons would be prepared and their increased adaptation to the needs of the congregation. Dr. John Hall says: "I think a minister in good health, and doing his work easily and naturally, should visit some on at least five days in the week. I have done that for months together. . . . A few hours a day spent in visiting gives exercise, bodily, intellectual, and moral. One studies better for it."

There are, indeed, positions in the ministry in which, from the extent of the church and the pressure of outside duties, the pastor can do little in this department beyond the visitation of the sick and cases of special religious perplexity. But these instances are rare and exceptional, and in such churches provision ought always to be made to supply the lack of pastoral visitation either by an assistant to the pastor, devoted to this work, or by delegating it to competent committees charged with its accomplishment. When the Baptist Tabernacle of New York, then worshipping in Mulberry street, numbered over a thousand members, widely scattered over that large city, the late venerated Deacon William Colgate organized a plan by which the congregation was divided into convenient districts, each placed under the care of a competent brother, and it long proved a most effective organization for church watch-care and visitation.

There is here a further inquiry: Does the pastor's duty

of visitation extend beyond the limits of his own congregation? The answer to this must depend on the number of his flock, his special aptitudes, and the amount of his own strength. The Lord does not require impossibilities. But whoever carefully considers that even in the rural districts of New York more than one-half the population attend no evangelical church, I think, will anxiously ask how this mass of neglecters of the gospel shall be reached; and the pastor who looks down Sunday after Sunday on a half-filled church may well inquire whether it might not be crowded if, instead of waiting for these careless souls to come to him, he should go to them and carry the message of the gospel, with the urgencies of an earnest, prayerful heart, into the bosom of their families. Or if this is not possible for him, ought he not to train and organize Christian workers in his church to make this aggressive movement on the mass of indifferentism around him? The inspiring and organizing of such aggressive Christian labor as faithful visitation from house to house are among the most important duties of the pastor, and no form of Christian activity is more fruitful in blessed results, both in the higher Christian development of the visitors and in the awakening and conversion of those who are visited.

II. The Method.

Here no single method can be suggested that will be adapted to all positions in the ministry, but the following general views may be considered.

The pastor's visits should be distinctly understood as designed for religious conversation. There are other occasions for visits of mere courtesy and personal friendship, but here his object is to place himself in religious contact with his people—to learn their experiences, to

remove their perplexities, to comfort their sorrows, to stimulate their religious activities—and thus, as one entrusted with the care of souls, to help them heavenward. The minister who passes from house to house conversing only on topics of mere secular interest neglects the great business of his life, and in the eye of the Master fails in the care of souls committed to his charge.

The visit should be religious, but it ought to be divested as far as possible of stiffness, formality, sameness. A sour visage and a formal style are not necessary to religious conversation. The pastor comes as a Christian friend deeply, tenderly interested in the religious welfare of the family, and, while dealing with their souls in all fidelity, he should use a natural, genial, winning manner such as to put them at ease and invite their confidence. He is to study character, and to employ his utmost tact and judgment in adapting his words to those addressed. Some pastors have a few stereotyped questions and exhortations which recur in every visit. A process so stiff and unnatural lacks all moral power; it is soon felt to be mere formal professionalism. No duty is more delicate or tasks more fully the minister's resources than the successful management of a pastoral visit, so as to leave a strong religious impression, and yet secure from old and young a hearty welcome for its repetition.

In visitation the pastor should overlook none. Domestics and children, as well as the heads of the family, should share his attention and be made to feel that he cares for their souls. Nor should any family or person be overlooked or passed by, but the visit should be strictly impartial, made alike to the rich and the poor, the converted and the unconverted. For this reason it is better to have a regular course in visitation. Then all know that there

is no favoritism, and in their turn they will alike share the regards of their pastor.

Ordinarily, the visit should be short. Circumstances will necessarily to some extent control this, but long visits almost inevitably lead to the introduction of secular topics and weaken or destroy the religious impression. Thoughtless persons will often importune the pastor for a half-day visit, to be followed by a festal dinner or supper. But let him beware of yielding to such importunities; it is fatal to his work in the study, and fatal to the religious force of the visit. No earnest minister will waste his time and powers in the gossip of such a visit. As a rule a brief visit—genial, but to the point—followed, when practicable, by a brief prayer specifically bearing the individual needs of the household before the Throne, is the most effective, and it leaves time to visit the whole congregation without detracting from thorough pulpit preparation.

A pastoral visit also should be confidential. No minister has the right to invite disclosures of the religious state of his people in the privacy of their families, and then go forth to retail these conversations through the community. It is the violation of a sacred trust. Many a pastor has thus destroyed his influence and barred against himself access to the confidence of his people. If he would be trusted as the confidential adviser and friend of his charge, let him be true to the trusts reposed in him in these visits.

Above all, the pastor must remember the injunction, "Instant in season, out of season." He should make the most of opportunities. In the store, the office, and the shop, on the farm, the roadside, and the car—everywhere—he is to seek to lead men to Christ. Wisely, indeed, he will observe the proprieties of time and place, but he

should neglect no real opportunity of conversing on vital personal religion. The care of souls is his life-work, his solemn charge, and concern for their salvation ought continually to reveal itself in his conversation. Especially must he seize on opportunities to speak the earnest, kindly word to the unconverted Ordinarily, this is better done when alone with them, as they are then more accessible and the appeal comes with greater power. The lack of this personal dealing with souls is one of the saddest defects that can mar the life of a minister.

III. The Advantages.

The personal religious growth of the pastor is greatly aided by this direct contact with the souls of his charge. In a minister's life the danger is that he may degenerate into mere professionalism. He may come to study God's word and its great truths, not with personal application, but with respect only to the preparation of his sermons and their application to the people. He may lose a vivid consciousness of his personal relations to God, and read and think and pray with reference only to others. Many a pastor actually advancing in general knowledge of the Bible and in professional power as to the composition and delivery and mental richness of his sermons is, after all, only retrograding in his inner personal life as a Christian.

But the direct contact with individual souls in pastoral visitation brings religion before him less as a theory, more as a living, personal reality. He deals here with religion in the concrete rather than the abstract. He is the witness of its actual power to comfort in sorrow, to strengthen in temptation, to guide in perplexity, to triumph in danger, and his own soul thus enters into a more full realization of it as a living fact. How often

when seeking to guide another to Christ does he himself find new access to him, or when administering consolation to a dejected, afflicted spirit do new courage and hope spring up in his own heart! It develops within him broader, purer sympathies and makes him a truer, nobler Christian.

Visitation also affords the best means of studying the people in their actual life, their characters, opinions, temptations, afflictions, and sins. The successful preacher must be a student of men, especially a student of his own congregation. Many a recluse pastor wastes the greater part of his force because his preaching lacks adaptation and practicalness. His sermon, it may be, is faultless in its rhetoric and logic and learning and orthodoxy, but it fails to move the people, because it does not come within the range of their experiences. It removes none of their perplexities; it touches none of their special sins; it discusses no questions vital in their life; it is not Ithuriel's spear, to touch and expose the masked tempter charming and deluding their ears. The preacher is not in sympathy with the actual life of the congregation, and the sermon, however abstractly true and beautiful, does not move and bless them. It is with the actual life the minister has to deal; and the study of it in all its manifold phases, as developed under the power of sin and grace, is essential to the highest power in the pulpit. An old divine used to say: "The preacher has three books to study—the Bible, himself, and the people."

Nor should I omit to say here that pastoral visitation is a mentally enriching process. In the study of life and experience, as a pastor meets them in passing from house to house, he is ever gaining new insight into character. In these conversations new vistas of truth open before him, and from these visits he comes back to his study

with new texts and subjects for sermons and new illustrations of experience and doctrine.

These pastoral visits, moreover, establish personal religious relations between the minister and the congregation, and thus greatly add to their interest in his sermons. They alter the standpoint of the hearer in reference to the preacher. The man with whom you have wisely and tenderly conversed on vital, personal religion cannot turn a cold, critical ear toward you on the Lord's Day; nor does he—what is equally fatal to spiritual benefit—listen as a mere admirer of your pulpit performances. He has a deeper feeling. He turns to you, not merely his critical and intellectual, but his religious, nature, and the words you speak, as the utterances of one sincerely seeking his eternal welfare, come to him with a religious power. This is, without doubt, the secret of many a successful pastorate, even where there has not been the aid of brilliant pulpit eloquence. The pastor has established personal religious relations with his hearers, and to them even his least elaborate sermons are clothed with sacred power. Brilliant sermonizing may secure popularity, but only this personal religious contact between pastor and people secures confidence; and a pastor's real power in producing spiritual, eternal results is dependent on the religious confidence of the people in him.

These visits also enable him to meet many whom the pulpit could never reach. In every community there are the aged, requiring the supports of religion in their declining life; the sick and sorrowing, craving the words of Christian consolation and hope; and the careless, needing the kindly invitation and warning. The pastor is God's commissioned messenger to such, and in these personal interviews he may adapt instruction, encouragement, comfort, and admonition to each.

Finally, pastoral visitation is a chief means of blessing and cementing the pastoral relation. Of late years pastorates have become of short duration. Hardly is a minister settled and fairly at work before the question of a change begins to be agitated. May not the decline of pastoral visitation, so faithfully done by many of our fathers in the ministry, be in part an explanation of this? The pastor's personal religious life is not brought into contact with his people; as the result, their religious confidence is not won, and his ministry is not in sympathy with their needs. The only bond between them is the pulpit; and when the novelty of his voice and manner and modes of thought has passed away, they are tired of him and seek a change.

Besides, when the pastor is not faithful to the souls of his people in private, they instinctively feel that he is not sincere—at least, not thoroughly in earnest—in his public preaching. On the Lord's Day he comes before them proclaiming the most solemn truths and pressing these truths with the strongest urgency, but in the week he meets them and has no words of kindly invitation and warning. He solemnly warns the impenitent from the pulpit of their imminent peril of everlasting burnings, but meets them in their homes or on the street, perhaps year after year, without one word expressive of his interest for their eternal welfare. Such inconsistency makes religious confidence impossible, and there is no adequate bond to bind pastor and people together.

But the relation of pastor and people, as God ordained it, is most sacred and enduring. Charged with the care of souls, he is to move among his flock as their spiritual guide and friend. The confessional, terrible as its power for evil is, was after all in its origin only a perversion of the pastoral institution, based on a real and universal

need—the longing of troubled souls for guidance, help in getting back to God. This need the pastor must meet as the confidential counsellor and helper of the individual members of his flock; and if true to this sacred trust, his resources of power are ever increasing, and new bonds of sympathy hold him more firmly year by year in the hearts of his church.

IV. Visitation of the Sick.

This is one of the most responsible and difficult duties of the pastor, for it often devolves on him the spiritual guidance of souls on the verge of eternity, when what is said must be said at once and words fitly spoken are of supreme moment. I have, therefore, reserved this subject for special suggestions.

1. The people should be instructed to notify the pastor when cases of sickness occur, for he is often blamed for neglect in visiting the sick when in fact he did not know of the sickness. He should make public request, therefore, that notice be sent him of such cases, with the fullest assurance of readiness on his part to respond to such a call at all hours and in all places. Of course, in cases of known sickness among his own people, a pastor will not wait to be invited, but will call as an understood part of his pastoral duty.

2. It is always prudent to visit the sick in a rested rather than wearied state of body, and with a full rather than an empty stomach; the liability to contract disease is thereby lessened. In contagious diseases a medical adviser should be consulted as to the best means of avoiding danger, and disinfectants should be carefully used after the visit to avoid endangering others. Whether in such cases it is duty to visit no rule can be given; the decision must be left to the convictions of the pastor

and the relations and circumstances of each. The words of Van Oosterzee, in his *Practical Theology*, deserve here, however, careful consideration: "The negative answer, favored by the theory and practice of some, finds an apparent justification in the natural desire for self-preservation and in the teacher's relation to his own family. In opposition to this, however, stands the consideration that even the Christian is bound to lay down his life for the brethren, how much more the shepherd of the sheep! and that, in this sphere also, loss of life in the service of the Lord is the way to the preservation of life. Without doubt, fulfilment of duty in this case may cost a painful sacrifice. . . . Nevertheless, the Lord and his congregation have unquestionably the right to demand that duty take precedence of everything; as accordingly Luther, in 1527, during the prevalence of the plague, remained with Pomeranus and two deacons at Wittenberg, and in this way answers the question formally raised by him in his tractate, 'Whether we may flee before death?' When, in 1574, the question here put was expressly deliberated at the Synod of Dort, the answer was given, 'that they should go, being called, and even uncalled, inasmuch as they know that there will be need of them.' With what right shall the physician of souls withdraw from a task from which even the unbelieving medical man does not too greatly shrink? . . . The risk incurred on that occasion finds its abundant compensation in the gratitude of the flock, the approval of our own conscience, and the ever-renewed experience that the Lord supports his servants in this school of exercise also, and not seldom manifestly preserves them. Of course, belief in his power and faithfulness can release no one from the duty of taking those measures of precaution prescribed under such circum-

stances by experience and science." This question is sometimes one of the most difficult in a pastor's life, and without doubt there is much danger that he may take counsel of timidity rather than of that faith which becomes a servant of God.

3. Careful preparation should be made for such visits by previous study and prayer. In this he is to seek a spiritual frame of mind, to select and familiarize Scripture passages adapted to the different spiritual conditions and needs of the sick, to elaborate fitting trains of thought, and to acquire brief, simple, and apt illustrations of the way of salvation, thus fitting himself for the different phases of spiritual condition in the sick. I hardly need add that at the basis, as underlying all preparation, there must be a sound judgment and a heart in genuine sympathy with the afflicted, so that the pastor comes into the sick-chamber as a wise and sympathizing friend, and is felt as such.

4. In manner it is important to be self-possessed and natural, sympathetic and cheerful, putting the sick at ease and inspiring confidence. The voice should be tender and subdued, but not falsely keyed and whining. The visit, except in unusual circumstances, should be brief. A neglect of these things will destroy the advantage of the interview, and in some cases will exclude the pastor from the sick.

5. In regard to conversation with the sick, no fixed rules can be given, since the cases present phases so varied; the good sense and tact of the pastor will suggest the best method in each case. Plainly, the matter of first moment is a clear, thorough, and accurate understanding of the spiritual condition of the patient, for without this the pastor's words may be misdirected, or may even be wholly misleading. He may administer

consolation where the heart is in rebellion against God and needs rather kindly warning, or he may encourage hope where the heart is self-deceived and God has spoken only condemnation. An interview alone, if it can be arranged, will sometimes secure from the sick a more full disclosure of the heart, and will enable the pastor to speak with greater directness and freedom. If the sick person is a Christian, the question then becomes, Is he at peace, submissively, restfully trusting all in God's hand? If not, ascertain what is preventing this, and if possible help the soul back to God. If he is not a Christian, seek to know what prevents him from becoming one, and lead him if possible to Christ. But use a careful discrimination, distinguishing clearly between the true and the false in religious experience, and avoid mere loose exhortations to come to Christ, which leave unexplained what Christ is, and what he has done, and what it is to come to him. In all cases, whether to saint or sinner, Christ is to be presented in his fulness of grace and power as the one Hope and the one Helper for the humble, penitent soul, and the thought of the sick is to be lifted and turned to him as a living, present Saviour and an almighty Friend.

6. Prayer, when practicable, should always be offered in the sick-room. In severe illness it is sometimes advisable to do nothing more than offer prayer, and in such a case, where the sufferer may be near eternity, how fitting and weighty ought to be these words of petition! How tender, earnest, direct, should be the prayer, bearing the case with all its priceless interests into the presence of God! Vinet strikingly says: "Expect much from prayer—I mean not only from its power with God, but from its immediate effects on the sick. We may say everything in prayer; under the form of prayer we may make every-

thing acceptable; with it we may make hearts the most firmly closed open themselves to us. There is a true *charm* in prayer; and this charm has also its effect on us, whom it renders more confident, more gentle, more patient, and whom it puts into affecting fellowship with the sick man, whoever he may be, by making God present to us both."

These seasons of affliction furnish a pastor the surest access to the homes and hearts of his flock; and rightly improved they greatly add, not only to his pastoral usefulness, but also to his personal hold on the affection and confidence of the families of his charge. Neglect of the sick and sorrowing on the part of a pastor, or a heartless, perfunctory manner in performing his duties to them, violates the most sacred obligations, and is justly felt alike by the religious and the irreligious as a reproach to him: it must in the end destroy the power of his work in the pulpit. He should use great care, therefore, to keep himself informed as to the sick and afflicted, to visit them promptly and frequently, and to come to their homes, in the spirit of his Master, with the tender, earnest sympathy of a Christian friend, and with the rich resources for Christian help and consolation with which he is entrusted by God as a minister of the gospel.

SECTION VIII.

REVIVALS OF RELIGION.

The history of Christianity is a history of revivals by which the work of redemption has been advanced among men; there is all reason to suppose that it will be so to the end. Men dream of the gospel advancing with even,

steady pace to its triumph, without vicissitudes of decline and revival, but the thought finds ground neither in the Bible nor in church history. The great revivals in the past have been epochs in which the Christian world has risen to clearer apprehensions of divine truth and a higher elevation of Christian life. They have constituted the divine process by which the gospel has burst through the errors and sins of men, and has found a more complete development in the consciousness and life of the churches of Christ.

No careful student of church history will undervalue revivals of religion. But it by no means follows that a pastor is to seek success only, or chiefly, in these special manifestations of spiritual power. For a revival ordinarily supposes a previous declension, which it was the design of the ministry to prevent; for they are given "for the perfecting of the saints, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph. iv. 12). Fidelity and wisdom in the pastor may keep the spiritual forces in a church so inspired and organized that its life will not decline, but develop and strengthen, and its condition consequently be one of continual growth and progress. Such is the fact in Mr. Spurgeon's church. As one mingles in its assemblies and observes its manifold and thoroughly organized activities, the preaching and devotion, the spirit and life, resemble what is seen in a powerful revival of religion. The Holy Spirit is continually present, and there is no cessation in the work of conversion. Toward this ideal a true pastor will be always working; and where it is attained a revival will mean, not a recovery from declension, but an acceleration in spiritual advancement and a mightier display of the Spirit's power in the conversion of men.

But in the ordinary manifestations of Christian life re-

ligious declension is often a marked and painful fact, and the pastor should seek the best methods for promoting a revival.

Here it is of primary moment to remember that a genuine revival is the result of the presence of the Holy Spirit: without him there may be excitement, but there can be no spiritual movement. It is "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord" (Zech. iv. 6). A deep sense of this is essential, and all thought and feeling should be turned to the invocation of his presence; but the Spirit works through human agencies and according to the laws of the human mind. The use of appropriate means, therefore, is also essential.

Here I suggest: 1. Christian life in the people will seldom rise above the spiritual level of the pastor; it is, therefore, of primary moment that the minister's own soul be "in the Spirit"—humble, fervent, and believing. Noise and zeal and declamation and management can be no substitute for the Holy Spirit in the soul. 2. As a revival of life in the church is ordinarily the condition of an awakening among the unconverted, the preaching at first should be specially adapted to search the experience and life of Christians, and lead to increase in personal holiness and personal activity. The church is "the light of the world" (Matt. v. 14), and the power of the gospel on the world depends on the clearness with which this light shines. 3. Seek to promote faithful personal conversation on the part of Christians with their unconverted kindred and friends. It is sometimes useful to organize committees to visit religiously from house to house in the congregation. It is obvious, however, that great care should be taken both as to the *personnel* of such committees and as to the method of their work. 4. Meetings should be multiplied as the interest manifested will justify. Continuous

meetings concentrate attention on the subject of religion, fix impressions which otherwise might be evanescent, and lead to religious decision. The block may seem unaffected by a single blow, but a succession of blows on the same point cleaves it. 5. The mode of conducting special meetings must be determined by the existing indications of the Spirit and providence of God. If gifts abound in the church, it is often better not to have additional preaching, but to continue social meetings, taking care to give variety in their tone and form. If preaching is necessary, the question whether an evangelist is to be sought, or help obtained from neighboring pastors, or the pastor himself should preach, must be determined by the circumstances. All these methods have proved useful. If assistance is sought, care should be used to secure a man of right spirit and practical wisdom.

The question may arise: Ought a series of meetings to be commenced when there is no special religious interest apparent? I reply: It seems to me that certainly equal reasons exist for the appointment of continuous meetings to awaken interest in the subject of religion, as for the appointment of such meetings to awaken interest in temperance, politics, or science. The same mental law is invoked in all such cases—viz., that *continuous* attention to a subject causes the mind to become interested and absorbed in it, and rouses the will to act respecting it. Now, as the Holy Spirit works in the soul, not contrary to the constitution God has given the mind, but in accordance with it, the interest thus awakened by continuous attention to the religion of Christ would seem to furnish the natural conditions for the Spirit's work. And as the gospel of Christ is the most important subject to which the attention of men can be called, there would seem to be the highest reason for the application of this mental law by appointing

continuous meetings in order to fix men's attention upon it.

In protracted meetings, however, there are sometimes serious evils, which a pastor should carefully avoid. Of these I mention: 1. A mere man-made excitement, in which the effort is rather to inflame the religious feelings than to enlighten and strengthen religious conviction. Such an appeal to the emotional, apart from the rational, nature results ordinarily in a disastrous reaction in the direction of indifferentism and scepticism. Many a field has been burnt over by these *pseudo*-revivals, and they constitute the most difficult fields for Christian labor, because religion has thereby been put under contempt. 2. A protracted meeting entered on for secondary ends, as to pay off a church debt or to strengthen the position of an unpopular pastor. Where a revival is sought without dominant regard to the glory of God and the salvation of souls, the effort is a failure. 3. A tendency to dependence upon protracted meetings to the disparagement of the ordinary means of grace. Great care is needed to guard against this, as it is destructive to the tone and effectiveness of church-life. The pastor, in prayer and sermon, should be careful to keep prominent before the people, not the revival as the great hope of Christian life and progress, but the right use of the usual, constant means of grace. Some ministers habitually speak as if the work of God in conversion and sanctification were restricted to seasons of revivals, and the effect is pernicious. To avoid this false reliance on special services, it is well not to appoint them at any stated intervals, or to push them in any way into special prominence. 4. In the reaction which occurs after the extreme nervous tension of a protracted meeting, guard against relapse in the converts. In the life of a plant the period of greatest peril is when it is transferred from the

hot-bed to the ground, for, missing the warmth and protection of the bed, and exposed to the cold and storms of the open field, it will inevitably droop and wither and die, unless carefully tended. The most difficult and arduous work of a pastor is after a revival in the care and instruction of converts, when the unusual stimulus to Christian activity is withdrawn; and it is just here that the evils exist which are commonly charged on revivals and evangelists, but which in reality result from remissness in the pastor and church. The converts should be introduced at once into the Sunday-school or Bible class, and should be made personally acquainted, as far as possible, with the members of the church. Where the number of converts is large, the pastor might privately request some judicious, experienced members to give them special attention, quietly handing to each a list of those thus specially commended to his or her friendly notice and care. A place and a work for each of the converts should also be sought; this is very important to their comfort and development.

SECTION IX.

CULTIVATION OF SOCIAL LIFE IN THE CHURCH.

The development of a true Christian life in the church depends much on the social influences which, like an atmosphere, pervade and envelop it. These, therefore, the pastor should seek to inspire and control. As far as possible, the membership should find their society within the church—not in a spirit of clannish exclusiveness, but on the principle that the higher bond of spiritual affinity, which binds them as a church to one another and to Christ, involves, as a natural consequence, the lower

bond of social affinity, so that the church is the natural sphere of the soul's activities, social as well as spiritual. To make the social life of the church strong, healthful, enriching, such as to render it a magnet to attract other souls, is of primary moment in a pastor's work. I suggest two ways in which this may be done.

1. Personal effort to promote mutual acquaintance in the congregation by introducing strangers, and by securing for them those attentions which will naturally draw them to the church as a home. See that they meet a cordial welcome at the public meeting, and also socially by the calling of members at their homes, and by extending to them social courtesies and kindnesses. A watchful pastor may do much to secure this by personal suggestion.

2. Social gatherings in the church, in which the people shall have opportunity for acquaintance and for the exercise of the social feelings. These differ in plan. (1.) They are sometimes purely social, in which the object is conversation, music, and such forms of recreation as may be innocent and healthful. The tact of the pastor will here be required to give the right tone and spirit to the gathering, to promote general acquaintance and sociability, and to guard against doubtful forms of amusement. (2.) They sometimes add to the social the literary element, and a part of the time is occupied with readings, recitations, essays, poems, and the discussion of subjects in history, biography, general literature, and science. These, when carefully managed, are often of great value in advancing the general culture and intelligence, and in calling out, especially in the young, talents which would otherwise be undeveloped. The successful working of such an organization of course presupposes broad intelligence in the pastor and not a little careful

thought and labor. (3.) Sometimes the object is not only social and literary, but also missionary, and the exercises consist in part of reports on missionary work, home and foreign, correspondence with missionaries, and essays on the lives of eminent missionary characters and topics relating to the missionary enterprise. The organization might also engage in different forms of actual mission work, such as mission Sunday-schools, religious meetings at destitute points, and personal labor, young men among young men, young women among young women, to bring them to church and otherwise help them in entering and prosecuting a Christian life.

The social element is so mighty a force that no pastor can afford to ignore it; nor should he imagine that it will take care of itself, for, left unguided, it will almost certainly take a false direction and destroy much of his work. His true position is as its inspiring leader, thus linking its power to those forces which shall ensure his success.

Hints.—1. The pastor, I think, should ordinarily hold no official position in these organizations, but should stand related to them simply as pastor, and as thus the general head of all church organization; and he should be felt not so much (if at all) in the assertion of his authority as in the way of quiet suggestion and inspiration. 2. In all social life there will necessarily be different social centres, caused by naturally differing social affinities, and it is unwise to attempt to break this up. But care should be taken that these social centres do not take on the exclusiveness of cliques with party spirit and jealousies, and that the aristocratic element does not develop itself to the discomfort or exclusion of the poorer classes. These tendencies, always present, should be carefully held in check. 3. Every house of worship

should have a church parlor, or some room which can readily be converted into one. This should be furnished attractively, and supplied with musical instruments, pictures, and other means of culture. If a reading-room and library can also be connected, it adds much value in the increase of intelligence among the people. A church will readily furnish funds for this purpose if properly instructed; for parents, aside from the advantage they personally derive from such an arrangement, will feel the advantage to their families of a church social life so strong and attractive as to draw and hold the children to the associations of the church in preference to the associations of the world.

SECTION X.

THE PASTOR AS AN ORGANIZER.

One chief function of a pastor is to develop and utilize the spiritual, mental, and social forces of the church. There is in every congregation much latent force, which needs to be developed, alike for the growth and usefulness of those who possess it and for the results it might secure for the church and the world. The minister is, in this respect, a general to whom troops are entrusted; his work is to train and organize and lead. The troops are to fight: he is to inspire and direct the battle. Some hardworking pastors take on themselves burdens which it were far better to lay on the people—better for the pastor, in leaving him free for other work, and better for the members, in calling out their gifts. Indeed, one of the strongest bonds which bind a church together is the consciousness of being mutual workers, each having a post of duty and

a share of responsibility. No member should be left in a purely receptive attitude—a mere attendant and listener —but each should have a place and a work assigned him. That church attains the truest and highest growth in which every member is a worker under the stimulus of a consciousness of responsibility and of a useful sphere of activity. Much of the imperfection of church-life is due either to the fact that this latent force is undeveloped, or, if developed, is misdirected. Here I suggest:

1. A pastor should carefully study his people with the view of ascertaining and utilizing their special aptitudes and gifts. The prayer-room, the Sunday-school, the teachers' meeting, and the pastoral visit all afford constant opportunities for this. One may show aptitude for teaching, and may be entrusted with a Sunday-school class. Another has the weight of character and the tact of leadership which fit him for conducting a neighborhood prayer-meeting. Another has the solid judgment and clear discernment of character which will make him useful on a committee of discipline or finance. Another, though possibly not marked in exhortation or prayer, may have social qualities such as admirably qualify him for managing the details and arrangements of the social gatherings of the congregation. A pastor who will constantly act on the motto, *A place and a work for every member*, and will press this motto on those who conduct the different departments of work in his church, will soon find himself at the head of an active, living, and ordinarily happy people, while yet he is not personally overburdened with the details of church-work. In some instances of eminent pastoral success the chief secret has been in this power of developing and utilizing the gifts of the church.

2. The organization of associations within the congregation for different departments of work is another means

of developing and utilizing the spiritual forces in the church. I have spoken in another place of literary and missionary organizations, but I may here add that an association for Christian work composed of young men in a church, and a similar one for young ladies, may often prove of great value—the one to act among young men, and attract and hold them to the church; the other for like service among young women. To such associations might be entrusted also mission Sunday-schools and distinct spheres of missionary effort. In a large congregation it is often desirable to organize committees for the care of the sick and the poor, and the visitation of strangers needing to be invited and welcomed to the congregation, and of erring and sinning ones needing to be won back to holiness and the church of God. In most places it is useful to have committees for the general visitation of the field occupied by the church, each committee being entrusted with a distinct district in it and made responsible for its cultivation. In neighborhoods remote from the church much good is often secured in local prayer-meetings placed under the supervision of some judicious person. A thoughtful pastor, thoroughly supervising his field, will find constant work, and manifold forms of it, in which he can utilize either individuals or organizations in his church; and in doing this there is a double blessing—that which comes to the workers, in making them larger and happier Christians, and that which comes to those for whom they labor. Two things, however, are here to be observed: (1.) Organizations should not be so multiplied as to conflict with the general meetings of the church or with each other. Each should subordinate its arrangements to those of the church, and each should have its own separate, distinctly-marked sphere. (2.) They should be kept under the pastor's supervision and be subject to

his guidance. It will be readily seen that this supposes care and tact on the part of the minister.

3. It is important that in this development of the forces in a church the pastor should mark those cases among the young in which special promise of intellectual ability appears, and should inspire and direct them toward a higher education. Intellect is a gift of God: it is criminal to leave it undeveloped. Be thoroughly alive to this fact, and impress it on the people. You will see young men and young women in your congregation who might, with adequate intellectual culture, occupy positions of power in life, and carrying into those positions a Christian character as well as a cultivated intellect might exert a wide and beneficent influence for Christ in the world. It seems to me one of the highest duties of a pastor to foster in such minds a desire and purpose for an education, and to facilitate in every possible way the attainment of that end. He should perpetually stimulate the people to a larger and higher intelligence, and never be satisfied unless numbers of the youth of his church are in higher institutions of learning. A failure to develop his people intellectually is a discredit to any minister.

4. Another important end to be secured is the development of ministerial gifts. The prayer-meeting, the Sunday-school, and the general work of the church will commonly, but not always, make these manifest. Sometimes a very diffident young man may possess them, but only encouragement will develop them. A pastor should be on the watch, and should take occasion to call out the latent power. A few kindly words of encouragement have often developed a man of ultimately wide usefulness. Besides this class, there is much talent in the church that could be utilized in lay-preaching, where men of good speaking ability and scriptural knowledge, without relin-

quishing business pursuits, might be employed at destitute points to proclaim the gospel. A pastor's care is needed in seeking out and setting at work these gifts for lay-preaching, and thus multiplying the agencies for evangelization around him.

SECTION XI.

FUNERAL SERVICES.

Funeral services bring the pastor into most tender and influential relations to the families of his congregation, but they are also among the most perplexing and difficult parts of his work. Warm sympathy must here be combined with wise discretion, or he may destroy at the funeral the effect of his most faithful teaching in the pulpit. Here I suggest:

1. Ordinarily, it is better to avoid a formal sermon at funerals. It unnecessarily protracts the service, often to the serious discomfort of the people, while it overtasks the minister both in the preparation required and in the performance of the duty. In case of the death of some person occupying public station or official position in the church a sermon may be proper, but even then it is usually better to deliver it on the following Sunday in the church. Sometimes also, in districts remote from the place of worship, where the people seldom hear preaching, there may be an advantage in a full sermon. But commonly a service at the house, brief, simple, tender, will secure the best results. This usually consists of the reading of a selection of Scriptures, an address, and a prayer. Singing is added, if desired by the bereaved family and singers are available.

2. Eulogies of the dead should be very sparingly indulged, and should in no case be made a prominent feature. For much eulogy, even of confessedly good qualities in the deceased, will almost always provoke remembrance of any opposite qualities he may have had, and will thus fail of its object. Besides, if eulogy forms a marked feature in a minister's funeral addresses, the omission of it, when ministering at the funeral of one whom he cannot conscientiously eulogize, will be embarrassing to him, and will often give offence to the friends. An analysis of the character of the deceased at such a time is a very delicate and difficult task, and it should not be undertaken except in those comparatively rare cases where the character has been so conspicuous for its high qualities that the moral judgment of the community instinctively recognizes it as a fitting model. Great care should be exercised, also, in regard to expressing, in the address or prayer, an opinion as to the spiritual character and destiny of the deceased. A minister, in the fervid sympathy evoked by the occasion, is sometimes betrayed into forms of expression such as only Omniscience may rightfully use. It is, indeed, his right, at the interment of one whose Christian character has been well attested, to assume that God's promises have been fulfilled, and to speak gratefully and joyfully of the blessedness of the pious dead; but in so doing he should speak rather with the confidence of hope than with the assumption of an absolute knowledge of the secrets of the heart.

3. The subject-matter of the address will often be suggested by the special circumstances connected with the deceased or the occasion. Apart from these, many general lines of thought will suggest themselves to the thoughtful pastor. Of these the following may serve as

hints: The fulness of power in the gospel to prepare for death, in its renewing, justifying, and sanctifying grace; The blessedness of the Christian beyond death, as admitted into the immediate presence of Christ and into the purity and associations of that holy place where he dwelleth; The glorious resurrection of the dead as the completing act of redeeming power and the ultimate goal of the Christian course; The certainty of the Christian's hope, as based on the promises of an unchanging God, contrasted with the uncertainty of all earthly expectations. Or special phases of truth and sources of consolation may be presented in the informal development of some passage of Scripture. Thus: The sympathy of Christ with the sorrowing, as seen at the grave of Lazarus and on other occasions; The certainty that affliction is not accidental, but is ordered in the infinite love and wisdom of God; The compassion and tenderness of God, as seen in that he doth not afflict willingly; The high and blessed results he intends in affliction; The brevity of earthly sorrow and the eternity of heavenly joy. Subjects adapted to such occasions will continually suggest themselves to a pastor who is in living, personal sympathy with his congregation; and it is wise to note them down as they occur and carefully preserve them. At the funeral of an unconverted person the selection of a subject is sometimes difficult; for here the minister, while he must needs be a "son of consolation" to the bereaved, is also under obligation to be faithful to the gospel and to the souls of men. He may not suggest, even by implication, a hope respecting the deceased which neither his sober judgment nor the truths he preaches allow him to feel; nor may he pursue a line of remark adapted to weaken a conviction of the solemn truth that a personal accept-

ance of Christ and a humble following of him in this life are absolutely essential to salvation; for in so doing he would be inconsistent and untruthful. It is equally evident, also, that in such a service, where he stands as a minister of consolation, it is not his duty to aggravate the sorrow of the bereaved by specially emphasizing the fearful doom of the unbeliever. Perhaps the general course of thought for such occasions would be found in topics which relate to the brevity and uncertainty of life; the way of salvation in the gospel; the ability and willingness of Christ to save; the rectitude and tenderness of God's providence; the refuge for the afflicted in the sympathy and salvation of Christ—topics which, while necessitating no allusion to the spiritual character and state of the deceased, yet afford ample scope for presenting the nature and urgencies of the gospel and the true sources of consolation for the bereaved. Whatever the topic, the spirit and manner should be dictated and pervaded by a genuine sympathy for the sorrowing, and a hearty appreciation of whatever was excellent in the character and life of the deceased. Though not a Christian, he may have been a valuable citizen, a just and generous man, a true and unselfish friend, a good husband and father. If any personal remarks are made, such characteristics may properly be recognized on such an occasion as honoring his memory and rendering his death a loss to the world.

4. The service at the grave should ordinarily be brief, as the people are standing and the circumstances of the place render an extended exercise undesirable. Some pastors use here some one of the printed manuals of burial services, others read from Scripture, or repeat from memory, a selection of passages relating to death, the grave, and the resurrection, and others make a

brief address. Whatever the method adopted, the service should be carefully prepared, and should vary in its form, in order to secure in this, as in all services, variety and adaptation to the occasion. The service is closed by the apostolic benediction, prefaced sometimes by a few words of prayer.

5. It is desirable to visit the family in which death has occurred before the funeral services, both to express your sympathy in the affliction and to learn any facts respecting the deceased and the arrangements for the funeral that may be necessary for you to know. The pastor should here have the character of an adviser and friend. In all arrangements for the funeral it is better, in general, to conform to the customs of the community; but so far as he may use influence in regard to these, it should be in favor of inexpensive simplicity and against ostentatious display. Costliness and display at funerals constitute in many communities an evil of such serious proportions and consequences that the ministry should decidedly set their face against it; for, established as an inexorable custom, it often augments and perpetuates the sorrow of a death in the family by creating debt and pecuniary embarrassment which remain for years to come. It is also important to visit the family soon after the funeral to administer further consolation, and to follow up any good impressions which affliction has made. This is often one of the pastor's best opportunities, as the heart is then tender and susceptible to religious influences. It is in these dark hours of adversity that the gospel is felt in its saving, consoling, helping power in the soul, and the pastor here should work with Providence, carefully improving the opportunity.

SECTION XII.

CULTIVATION OF THE MISSIONARY SPIRIT.

The importance of a deep, all-pervading missionary spirit in the church can hardly be overrated. Its value is not to be estimated only in the work done and the money raised for the spread of the gospel, but also in the enlarged and enriched life of the church itself, and the higher and nobler type of Christian character it thus presents to the world. A pastor who fails in this is failing at once to make his church a power for Christ in the world, and to secure within it the fulness of life which Christ intended it should possess.

To develop and foster a missionary spirit in the church requires, as a first necessity, the presence of such a spirit in the pastor himself. Without this no method, however excellent, will be likely to succeed; but with it the spirit of missions will not appear merely on special missionary occasions, but will pervade all his public utterances in the pulpit and the prayer-room. It will diffuse itself as an atmosphere of life through the whole congregation, and, inbreathed, it will impart vitality and power to the whole body. But, added to this general influence, a fixed method of labor for this is desirable, and in regard to this I make the following suggestions:

1. A regular system of contribution for benevolent objects, taken either by subscription paper or by public collection or in boxes conveniently placed for receiving the funds. It is the custom of many churches to divide the year into four or six periods, devoting two or three months, as the case may be, to each of the benevolent objects; and this has often proved successful. Whatever plan is adopted, it should secure regularity of contribu-

tion, and should reach the whole congregation, old and young, rich and poor; otherwise, only the few will contribute, and the blessing connected with self-denying giving will be lost by the mass of the people.

2. A missionary sermon at least as often as the recurrence of these periods. In these sermons the great principles of benevolence should be developed and enforced, and the leading facts in the different departments of Christian work spread before the people. It is not necessary or desirable to preach a "begging sermon" with sensational incitements to give. In fact, our Lord's great principle, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts xx. 35), suggests that giving should be presented, not as a duty chiefly, but rather as an exalted privilege whose reward is in itself. Properly prepared, "the missionary sermon" may be made a most attractive feature in the pastor's public work; and if steadily kept in view and materials carefully preserved for it as they occur in his reading and reflection, the preparation will not be difficult. A special note-book, preserving thoughts and illustrations for missionary sermons, will rapidly fill up with a pastor who reads with method and care.

3. The monthly missionary concert of prayer. This is of vital importance, because here the missionary spirit of the church finds devotional expression. The pastor makes a serious mistake who fails to maintain this, or allows it to be regarded as of minor moment. No meeting is capable of being made more effective for his home work than the monthly concert, properly conducted. In regard to this I offer the following hints: (1.) It is not necessary to restrict the sphere of the meeting to foreign missions, but there are important advantages in allowing it to embrace all departments of evangelization, home and foreign, through the different branches of work—in the pulpit,

the school, and the press. Thus one evening might be devoted to the condition of the freedmen at the South and the work in progress among them, educational and missionary; another to the work of home missions on the frontiers of civilization at the West, developing the leading facts respecting the vast immigration into those new regions, the needs of Christian workers there, and the kind of work there to be performed; and another to the Karens or Assamese or Chinese, or other division of the foreign work. The meeting would thus be highly educative by the wide range of its information, and would promote a broad intelligence in the membership, while the breadth of the field would afford an unfailing variety of vital subjects to interest and hold the people. (2.) In opening, the pastor might present a brief survey of the whole field, selecting only events of special interest and incidents adapted to impress them. This might be followed by one or more papers or statements, from selected members of the church or congregation, on the special field chosen for the evening, or on some prominent laborer in it, the time of the speaker or reader being carefully limited. This would leave ample time for prayer, which is the main purpose of the meeting, and for such spontaneous utterances as might be made by the assembly.

The hints above suggested are necessarily imperfect and general, for every church has its peculiarities, and the pastor must often adapt his methods to theirs. But the object to be attained, the missionary development of the church, is of the highest moment, and he should study methods with the fixed purpose of reaching, in some way, that end.

SECTION XIII.

THE PULPIT AND THE PRESS.

In the olden time the Bible formed the chief reading of Christian congregations, and the pulpit occupied the place of power in popular instruction. This is now changed. The newspaper, the magazine, the popular novel, the multitudinous products of the press, crowd the Bible from its former place even in religious families, and the platform and the press rival the pulpit as vital educative forces in guiding and controlling popular thought. It is useless to declaim against this; it is one of the great facts of providence connected with our age and life; but the wise pastor will carefully consider what he can do to control this inevitably potent force of the press, and make it a help instead of a hindrance to his work; for with proper supervision this vast power may be made a most beneficent auxiliary to the pulpit. Here I suggest:

1. The pastor should aim to secure in every family a good religious newspaper. This is a matter of primary moment, for such a paper is an ever-present force, educating religious thought and feeling and enriching and elevating practical life. Most pastors would be startled, on making the inquiry, to find how few families in their congregation take a religious paper, and how many are taking only trashy and often morally poisonous publications, the habitual reading of which must utterly neutralize the instruction and influence of the pulpit. The magazine and newspaper are the habitual reading of the family circle; and the pastor who fails to exercise watchful care in regard to the character of this reading will often find it one of the most destructive forces at work among his people.

2. The intelligent and thoughtful minister, in his public

and private work, will often call the attention of his people to good books, and use his influence to introduce them. His people, pressed under secular care and toil, are most of them not in a position to judge of the value and tendency of the literature offered to them; and they rightfully look to him, as an intelligent and studious man, to guide their judgment in the selection of reading. The Sunday-school library also should be carefully selected under his eye and secured a wide circulation. In a large congregation it may sometimes be of advantage to have a reading-room and a circulating library, placed under the care of some association; and over this also the pastor's watchful supervision will be required. He should also provide himself with tracts—brief, simple, pungent, clearly setting forth sin, redemption, repentance, faith, and Christian duties—such as may awaken the careless, guide the inquirer, and press to duty the hesitant Christian. These little winged evangels are most valuable auxiliaries in his pastoral work, and should be kept for judicious circulation in the inquiry meeting, in pastoral visitation, and in seasons of revival. As issued by our Publication Society, they are now of such wide variety and high value, and of such slight cost, that no pastor should allow himself to neglect a means so important to his success.*

3. The subject of reading and books should also be presented in the pulpit that the great importance of care in this may be felt, and the purity of the homes of the people be guarded against the pernicious influence of a poisoned literature. Many a Christian parent has never been aroused

* It would be well were every church to see that the pastor is furnished with a sufficient supply of such publications. Some churches are accustomed to make regular provision for this object. They believe that the soldier should not be expected to purchase his own ammunition.—EDITOR.

to the real peril in which he is placing his family by the reading he thoughtlessly admits to the home circle.

4. A pastor should also seek to inspire and elevate the public sentiment of the community where he is located in regard to schools, lyceums, libraries, and public lectures, so as to secure pure and Christian influences at these important fountains of public opinion and character. As an educated man and a Christian minister, this duty naturally devolves on him; and his influence, rightly and quietly used, may often determine the question whether the schools shall be under Christian or non-Christian instruction, or whether the lecture-course shall be filled by men who revere God's word or by those who hate and traduce it. No minister ought to be indifferent to the public sentiment around him; for it is the intellectual and moral atmosphere in which his people live, and which must needs tend either to poison or to purify their souls.

SECTION XIV.

RELATIONS TO OTHER DENOMINATIONS.

The pastor's position and work bring him into contact with other ministers and churches in the community, and his comfort and usefulness will to some extent depend on the esteem and confidence with which he is regarded by evangelical Christians outside of his own church. He will find many of the noblest Christian men and women in churches differing in name from his own, and he should seek to maintain with them the most frank and cordial relations. This is especially important as regards the pastors, since, when relations of mutual affection and confidence exist, the ministry in any community can be emi-

nently helpful to each other, and by combining their counsels and influence can often greatly advance the religious interests of the whole people. I suggest, therefore:

1. Do not isolate yourself, standing aloof from the general Christian community, but seek the acquaintance of all good men. Show a friendly, cordial spirit and a readiness for all offices of kindness, alike in the relations of social life and on those public occasions when all Christians gather for united counsel and worship. In such a course you will find the love and sympathy of the Christian community attracted to you, greatly augmenting your comfort and influence, and giving added power to your public work.

2. Such friendly relations among Christians of differing views involve of necessity a full recognition of their common Christian character and a hearty accord, each to the other, of sincerity and purity of motive in their church position. This a just self-respect requires you to insist on for yourself, and this, in the spirit of genuine charity, you should freely accord to others; such a position is consistent with the most full and free expression of your denominational sentiments and the most earnest defence of them. It simply requires that amidst the differing opinions of Christian men there should be a charitable judgment of each other's character, and a careful abstinence from language that might reflect on the motives of those who differ. It is, I think, the common fact that the genuine respect and confidence of any Christian community are most fully secured by that pastor who, while always decided and earnest in the expression and defence of his denominational convictions, is also always careful, in the spirit of true charity, to recognize the sincerity and integrity of those whose convictions may be opposed.

3. An occasional exchange of pulpits by the evangel-

ical ministers in the community has many advantages. It is a public recognition of the substantial unity of Protestant Christendom. It gives to the minister a wider audience than if always limited to his own congregation, thus enlarging his acquaintance and tending to secure for him the interest and confidence of the whole people. It is sometimes a relief, enabling him to make use of former pulpit preparations when specially pressed by the exigences of pastoral work. In such an exchange it is obvious that courtesy and comity require that the minister should conform to the usages of worship observed in the congregation where he is thus officiating, and that the subject presented should belong to the gospel as held in common by evangelical Christians, and not to matters controverted among them. In this, as in all relations with other pastors and churches, the minister should observe with scrupulous delicacy the requirements of courtesy and honor.

4. Union meetings are sometimes held by churches of different denominations for the promotion of a revival of religion, during the progress of which each church is expected to waive its distinctive peculiarities and all unitedly press on men the claims of the common gospel. Such a union of effort has undoubtedly proved useful among feeble churches and in neighborhood meetings remote from large centres of population; for there, from the paucity of numbers and gifts, all the Christian forces must needs be concentrated in order to maintain the interest. In such meetings every consideration of honor requires that the subjects presented should be restricted to those common truths of the gospel in which all are united; a departure from this is always to be deplored. Among strong churches, however, where gifts abound, the utility of such a union is more doubtful; indeed, it is

questionable whether there are not positive disadvantages. For, (1.) The members of the participating churches in such a meeting are placed under unusual circumstances which often serve to repress rather than develop their activity, and thus the labor falls on only a few more prominently gifted persons; whereas, a meeting in which the responsibility rested on only one church would have drawn into active work the mass of its members, and secured to it the blessing which such general activity brings. (2.) According to the Baptist faith, the ordinances of the gospel vividly set forth divine truth before men, and in the experience of our churches their administration is commonly attended by the convicting power of the Holy Spirit in the consciences of those who witness them. But in a union meeting these cannot be administered, or even alluded to, without impropriety, and this element of power is lost. (3.) It is not unfrequent, at the close of such meetings, that the efforts of such churches to secure members from the converts result in friction and unkind feeling—an evil sometimes more than counterbalancing the good done in the temporary union. While, therefore, it is not denied that union meetings have sometimes been useful, as a general thing they are not desirable. A church will ordinarily develop more effectively its own gifts and its own spiritual power by working alone and in accordance with its own principles and methods. It allows its light to shine most fully and clearly only when it steadily teaches and defends whatever of truth it has learned by the teachings of the word of God. At the same time, its relations to the other churches in the community will, in the long run, be far less likely to be embarrassed and embittered.

SECTION XV.

CHANGE OF FIELD.

Instability in the pastoral office is the common fact, and every pastor, sooner or later, meets the question, Shall I change my field? One cause of this is to be found, doubtless, in the restless spirit of the age, which is impatient with the old and ever clamoring for the new. This is specially the case in our country, and is one of the natural results of rapid growth and a widely-diffused spirit of enterprise.

I. Evils of Change.

The evils of a change of field are many and serious, and only the most imperative reasons will justify a pastor in making it. For, 1. It involves a serious loss in the pastor's working capital, for the confidence and love of a congregation, which a true minister acquires, constitute a chief element in his power. These, however, unlike mere popularity, are only slowly acquired; but, once secured, they add immensely to the value of his public and private work. But this advantage is all relinquished on leaving the field, and must be again slowly acquired at another post. A pastor's power also to benefit a people by a wise adaptation of his work to their character and needs must depend largely on his knowledge of them; but in making a change this is lost, and can be regained only by similar study of a new congregation. 2. Few ministers widen their range of original investigation after their first pastorate. At the first post they are compelled to push out into new lines of thought, but in a new field the temptation to use old subjects, if not old sermons, often proves irresistible, and their life-thinking is likely to move round

in the same narrow range. Pastoral change often thus checks intellectual and theological growth. 3. This restless expectation of change also discourages broad, comprehensive plans for the instruction and development of the church, and tempts the minister to aim exclusively at immediate results. Hence, his sermons are largely sentimental or sensational, confined within a limited range of topics, and the development of church-life is correspondingly dwarfed. 4. The marked decline in public respect for the ministry is probably in part a result of this feverish restlessness, which weakens confidence in them as men of high, unselfish purpose, and compels a community to regard the minister no longer as a permanent force in its life, but rather as a transient sensation.

II. Inadequate Causes of Change.

Many causes operate to unsettle a pastor which ought not to produce that result; indeed, some of them, if rightly interpreted, would have served rather to strengthen than to dissolve the pastoral relation. Thus, 1. Mental depression. A sedentary, studious life often induces abnormal nervous conditions, and the hypochondriac misinterprets the feelings of the people and underestimates the results of his ministry. A change is in consequence resolved on, which subsequent developments show to have been wholly unnecessary. 2. The loss of popularity. This is often due to real defects in the character and work of the pastor, and its true remedy is not a change of field, but a correction of his faults. Imperfect preparation has, perhaps, made his sermons commonplace and his pulpit a failure. Or he has failed to cultivate executive, pastoral, and social power, and, as the result, the church is not in effective working condition, and no bonds of personal sympathy and affection bind pastor and people. Or there are imperfections

in his spirit and life, and these forbid confidence and respect on the part of the congregation. In all such cases a loss of popularity does not indicate so much a change of field as a change in the spirit, plan, and work of the pastor, for these defects would in any field soon lead to the same result. 3. Difficulties in the church. Such trials enter more or less into every minister's lot, but they may be no indication of duty to change. The trial may be sent as a discipline, designed to develop, through faith and patience, a nobler character and higher power in the pastor. Change in this case is only a cowardly running away from duty, and consequent failure to gain an intended blessing. Many a disruption of the pastoral tie, it may be feared, is thus only a shrinking from trial and its intended discipline, and results only in loss to pastor and people. 4. Ambitious seeking for distinguished position. There is an unhallowed ambition which, unsatisfied with advancement through natural growth, is ever restlessly seeking, by newspaper notoriety, sensational sermons, and influential friends, to secure prominent places in the ministry. A vacant pulpit in a conspicuous church is usually beset by many such ambitious aspirants for place and notoriety. It is hardly necessary to suggest that such a spirit is at the farthest possible remove from the genuine spirit of the Christian pastor; and in the end it reacts disastrously on the reputation of him who indulges it, for self-seeking and pretence are sure, sooner or later, to be exposed.

III. Valid Reasons for Change.

A change of field is doubtless sometimes the duty of a pastor, and the providence and Spirit of God, which guided him in forming the pastoral relation, will make equally plain the obligation to dissolve it. Some of the reasons which may require a change are the following: 1. Growth

in pulpit and pastoral power beyond the scope of the field. A young man has settled, perhaps, in a circumscribed field. Fidelity in study and labor has developed him, so that his capacity plainly fits him for a wider sphere. If this is made evident by the judgment of his brethren and the providence of God, he is required by duty, alike to his own life-usefulness and to the cause of Christ, to enter the wider field opened before him. 2. The necessities of health in himself or family. The severity of the draft made in this age on the intellect and nerves of a minister may sometimes compel change so as to obtain relief by the more free use of previous pulpit preparations. This, though unfortunate for the intellectual growth of the minister, is still to be chosen rather than broken health. Or the climate may prove unfavorable, and on this account a change be demanded. 3. Inadequate salary. The pecuniary support may be insufficient for the growing needs of the pastor, and a new post with larger salary may be opened to him. Here, however, great care must be taken in scrutinizing motives, for a wealthy church and a large salary have glittering attraction and appeal strongly to mere selfishness. The need of larger income must be real, not fancied. 4. Permanent discomfort and embarrassment in his work. A minister, even after the most conscientious discharge of his duties, will sometimes find controlling influences in the church arrayed against him, or his cherished plans of church work defeated by counter-counsels; so that the pastor and permanent and influential members of the church are in relations wholly incompatible with comfort or efficiency. Now, if these relations cannot be altered, it would seem clearly his duty to leave, and to enter a field where his relations will be congenial and his labors unobstructed.

Finally I suggest: A pastor must expect trials in any

church, and commonly, in a change of place, he will only find a change in the form of trial. It is a serious question whether in most instances of change a simple faith in God, a patient forbearance, and a persistence in faithful work would not have avoided the necessity, and added much to the strength of the pastor in the higher development of all the forces of his intellectual, moral, and spiritual nature, and in the enlargement of his influence as a minister of Christ. Certainly the unrest so widely seen now in the ministry argues a great wrong somewhere, either in pastors or in churches, and is serving to deteriorate the character and weaken the influence of both.

SECTION XVI.

MINISTERS NOT IN THE PASTORAL OFFICE.

All ministers are not called to the pastorate; and it is sometimes the duty of those who were once called to that position to leave it and enter a different department of ministerial work. In the ministry which the ascended Christ gives his church, besides pastors, there are "evangelists" and "teachers"—terms designating important classes of ministers permanently existing in the kingdom of God. A brief characterization of these, and of the functions with which they are charged, may properly be presented here.

First, Evangelists.

Of this class, Philip, Barnabas, Apollos, Timothy, and Titus are examples in Scripture—men having no permanent, local charge, but commissioned to preach and

administer the ordinances of the gospel wherever the Spirit and providence of God might call. These men were engaged, for the most part, in work analogous to that of our foreign and home missionaries—preaching the gospel where it was not already preached, organizing churches, and supervising them in their incipiency while yet feeble and struggling. It is probable, also, that at times their work resembled that of those men called, in a narrower sense, evangelists—men engaged in assisting pastors and churches in special services for the promotion of revivals of religion. Possibly, Barnabas, when sent by the church at Jerusalem to labor in the great awakening at Antioch, may be conceived as acting in such a capacity, as also Timothy when left in Ephesus by Paul to hold in check certain heretical tendencies in that city (Acts xi. 22–24; 1 Tim. i. 3, 4). Evangelists, therefore, may be considered under the following classifications:

I. Foreign Missionaries.—In considering the question of duty to enter the foreign field, the first inquiry necessarily relates to qualification, since without this no mere desire or emotion in regard to the work can have any weight. As among the more obvious requisites for the missionary work the following may be mentioned: 1. *A sound body.* Most of our mission-fields are in the East, in an enervating climate, and under conditions such as severely test the vigor of the physical constitution. No person already enfeebled by disease or seriously predisposed to disease should venture into the foreign field, as the probabilities would all be against his ability to labor there. On this point, it is obvious, skilled medical advice should be sought. 2. *Common sense.* The practical administration of the affairs of the mission, temporal as well as spiritual—its building, its finances, its business contracts and relations, the whole management—usually

falls upon the missionary, and requires large practical tact and sagacity. In a new field he has no reliable advisers, and must depend on his own judgment in deciding on all the temporal concerns of the mission. In the older fields, while some of the business cares may be devolved on native helpers, he must still move among the native churches as a practical and influential adviser, guiding their affairs, settling their difficulties, and correcting their mistakes. An unpractical, visionary mind, however scholarly and brilliant, is obviously unfitted for such a position. 3. *Facility in learning to speak in a foreign tongue.* A foreign language, and most of all an Oriental language, is difficult to acquire, especially so as to use it readily and fluently in common speech. Some men of good abilities have here failed in the foreign field, and, though useful perhaps in other departments, have never been effective in preaching. There should be, at least, an ordinary aptitude for language sufficient to ensure that with persevering effort the man will be able to master and use the vernacular of the people. 4. *Power as a preacher.* Preaching, among the heathen as elsewhere, is the grand means of evangelization, and the conditions of power in it are everywhere essentially the same. The missionary must be "apt to teach," with a ready command of his faculties for argument and illustration, and a mastery of the art of putting things. In the conversational method of preaching in heathen lands, he is often obliged to meet in popular argument acute and profound reasoners, when his defeat before the people might prove a serious check to the gospel. 5. *Faith, energy, and perseverance.* At these outposts of Christianity a timid, wavering spirit, faint-hearted and irresolute, will be sure to fail. Courage, determination, energy, alone will achieve permanent results. Carey and Judson

waited years with unfaltering confidence for the first convert, and without substantially the same elements of character no man will succeed in pioneer work.

In deciding on the qualifications of a young man, however, it is to be remembered that he is as yet, in many respects, undeveloped, and qualities now present only in the germ and tendency will often in the actual work reveal themselves in marked power. Abroad, as at home, circumstances and emergencies develop the man. No young man, therefore, may hastily dismiss the question of a personal call to the foreign field on the ground of disqualification. Rather, he should carefully study his own character, and seek counsel of those best fitted to judge his capabilities, that in deciding a question of such moment he may act deliberately, with a full and impartial view of all the considerations, and with a clear conscience, always recognizing the danger that unconsciously to ourselves our selfishness is likely to magnify the reasons adverse to a missionary life and underestimate the force of those in favor of it.

The nature of the missionary work and the manner of its prosecution I shall not here consider: these will be found very fully presented in the work of the late lamented Rev. M. J. Knowlton, D. D., *The Foreign Missionary*, and in that of Rev. Dr. Rufus Anderson, entitled *Foreign Missions, their Relations and Claims.* The position of a missionary is in some respects one of great delicacy, and requires on his part the most careful circumspection. Here may be mentioned: 1. His relation to the Missionary Board at home. Charged with the administration of the funds entrusted to them by the churches, the Board must of necessity exercise a certain measure of supervision and guidance in the conduct of the foreign work. The exact line of demarcation between the authority of the Board

and the independence of the missionary in directing movements is not always easy to discover, and without a spirit of gentleness, forbearance, and concession the most serious complications may arise. In the expenditures of the mission, also, the keeping and rendering of an exact account are of the utmost moment, so as to avoid even the suspicion of wastefulness or malappropriation. The rule of Paul is here, as in all financial trusts, the only safe one: "Being careful of this, that no one should blame us in this abundance which is administered by us; for we provide for what is honorable, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men" (2 Cor. viii. 20, 21*). 2. His relations to the native pastors and churches are also of great delicacy. In the older missions the work of the missionary is largely that of general supervision of the native churches. But in this the missionary may not exercise an arbitrary power. He is not a bishop with authoritative episcopal power, subjecting the pastors under control and ignoring the independence of the churches. Rather, his power is moral, and his work is to train the churches and pastors for the independent exercise of their respective functions. He should, therefore, carefully guard against an arbitrary spirit or any methods of procedure which could militate against the just independence of pastors and churches. It is a distinguished proof of the high character of the noble men who have gone out as missionaries that, while in these and other respects their relations are of such delicacy, difficulties between them and the home Board have so rarely arisen, and the churches they have trained so fully exemplify in their character, organization, and working the simplicity and independence of the churches of the New Testament.

II. Home Missionaries.—Most of these are pastors of

* New version.

new or feeble churches, and their position differs from that of ordinary pastors only in the fact that their support is derived in part from some missionary organization, and that they are under consequent obligation to render a report of their work to the body which thus aids in sustaining them. Some of them, however, are engaged in purely itinerant ministerial work in the waste places of our cities, or in newly-settled or unevangelized parts of our country, visiting from house to house, preaching as Providence may give opportunity, organizing Sunday-schools, and forming churches. Few positions demand more force of character, soundness of judgment, intellectual ability, indomitable energy, and self-sacrificing devotion. Among the men occupied in this work are some of the noblest and most devoted servants of Christ. Their duties, however, being in most respects the same as those of ordinary pastors, do not need here a separate treatment.

III. Revivalists.—In all ages gifts have been bestowed specially adapted to the awakening and conversion of souls. These gifts may not, and sometimes do not, fit the man for the pastoral office, but as supplementing a pastor's gifts they are often of high value. The revivalist may not always possess the learning and teaching power of the settled pastor; he might perhaps fail in the qualities essential to the continuous guiding, organizing, and governing of a church; but in power to make vivid the truths and impressions already received by the people, to develop hitherto latent conviction, and to press men to a definite and avowed religious decision, he may be specially gifted. Some pastors eminent in teaching and pastoral qualifications lack the awakening power, and thus it is often true in the spiritual work that "one soweth and another reapeth." In such cases the revivalist comes as a reaper, with special gifts for ingathering, where

the long and patient toil of the sower and cultivator has preceded him, and has already prepared in the souls of the people the ripening spiritual harvest.

1. The relation of the evangelist to the pastor, in special religious services, is always one of great delicacy. The most frank understanding and cordial co-operation between them is of the highest moment. Much care, therefore, should be taken not to encroach on the prerogatives of the pastoral office, or to lessen the estimation in which the pastor is held by the people. There is sometimes danger of this. The sermons of the evangelist, limited as they are in number and frequently repeated, not only have the attraction of novelty to the people, but are often spiced with a fulness of anecdote and delivered with a freedom and force which the pastor's cannot possess, by reason of the different and wider range of subjects which he must discuss and the far heavier and more extended draft made on his resources. The less thoughtful hearers will contrast what seems to them to be the comparative dulness of the pastor with the freshness and spice of the evangelist, and the pastor unjustly suffers. Among the converts also there is often a special attraction to him who had been the immediate agent in their conversion, while the long and patient toil of him who had probably prepared the way for that final step is overlooked or disparaged. Plainly, it is the duty of the evangelist to recognize and hold in check these tendencies, and to strengthen in every possible way the pastor's position in the convictions and affections of the people. He may thus render his work a permanent blessing in the churches by making it the means of cementing the relation of pastor and people.

2. A young pastor will naturally defer in the arrangements for the meetings to the judgment and experience

of the evangelist, but it is doubtful whether, under any circumstances, an evangelist should seek the control of them, or a pastor should concede it to him. Especially should the pastor maintain the control of those meetings in which candidates for admission to the church are examined; for here the pastor, apart from the official duty Christ has laid on him in this vital matter, has by his acquaintance with the people much better qualifications for judging character, and is far less likely to mistake than a stranger. Indeed, the temptation to seek the *éclat* of a large accession of converts may enter as an unconscious influence in the case of both evangelist and pastor, leading to undue haste and neglect of just discrimination in the admission of members, and resulting in great ultimate injury to the church. No point, therefore, needs to be more carefully guarded.

3. The object of the evangelist is the awakening of souls and the revival of religion; his subjects, therefore, are properly adapted in their nature and in the manner of their presentation to secure that result. The range of topics is thus necessarily limited, and the manner is naturally stimulating and exciting. From this comparative narrowness in the range of his theme and of his biblical and theological investigation, there is danger of one-sidedness in his views of truth. Seeking as he does, also, immediate results, he is liable to fail in perceiving and estimating at their just importance ultimate results in the permanent life and power of the church. Measures have sometimes been adopted in the midst of a religious excitement which the calm after-thought of the people could not approve, and the result has been a reaction in the public judgment, condemning the work and seriously injuring the church.

4. Eccentricity in the evangelist, when it is natural as

a part of his individuality, may possibly be an element of power, at least as awakening curiosity and calling the people to the house of God, but when assumed and cultivated with a view to popular effect it is always unfortunate. Sensational subjects, slang phrases, vulgarisms, overcolored anecdotes, exaggerated statements, oddities of manner, though for the moment exciting the attention. and possibly the applause, of the audience, inevitably in the end react to the disadvantage of the speaker and his cause; the sober after-thought of even the irreligious will condemn them in one who is dealing with souls in the great concerns of religion.

> "He that negotiates between God and man,
> As God's ambassador, the grand concerns
> Of judgment and of mercy should beware
> Of lightness in his speech. 'Tis pitiful
> To court a grin when you should woo a soul;
> To break a jest when pity would inspire
> Pathetic exhortation; and t' address
> The skittish fancy with pathetic tales
> When sent with God's commission to the heart." *

The evangelist, perhaps, is in special danger of seeking the temporary advantage which eccentricity brings, because for the time it gathers the multitude to his preaching; and, leaving soon, he fails to see the disastrous reaction which afterward it is sure to bring.

5. Some of the most eminent evangelists have used substantially the same subjects through their entire career, at each repetition of them adding to their clearness and force of argument vividness of illustration and effectiveness of appeal. Rev. Jacob Knapp, whose work has perhaps been surpassed in extent and power by no preacher of the present century, adopted this method.

* Cowper *Task*, book ii.

The writer was with him in three series of meetings, the first near the opening of his remarkable career, the last about thirty years after, near its close, and in each of these that distinguished revivalist used, for the most part, the same subjects. But the advance in all elements of power was immense, especially in the last repetition of his course. Few persons in the vast multitude which gathered daily for six successive weeks to listen to this, which proved the closing series of his life, can ever forget the compactness and force of his reasoning, the graphic power of his illustration, and the wonderful effectiveness in his application of truth to the conscience and the heart. He had gathered into that series of seventy-five or one hundred sermons the richest results of his life-thinking and experience, and had made most of them marvels of power. This concentration of the whole force of the man on a few sermons gives the evangelist great advantage in the pulpit, and would seem to be the dictate of true wisdom.

6. In his personal religious life the evangelist, while possessing great helps, has a possible danger on the side of spiritual pride. Moving constantly in the midst of revivals, he is liable to forget that for the most part he is simply reaping where other men have sown, and that conversion is but the culminating point in a long series of influences of which his was only the last; and in the grateful affection of revived Christians and of converted souls, which sometimes rises to spiritual adulation, he may fail in that genuine humility which recognizes all spiritual effects as the work of the Holy Spirit, and may unconsciously assume an air of spiritual superiority painfully in contrast with his obvious weaknesses. Power with God is thus lost, and with it power with men.

There is no ministerial office of higher responsibility or greater usefulness than that of the evangelist. It has

been filled by some of the noblest and ablest men in the church of God—men "full of the Holy Ghost and of faith," whose names are fragrant in the memories of multitudes as heralds of salvation. Ordinarily, only experienced men should enter it; for it requires a purity and strength of character, a soundness of judgment, and a largeness of faith and patience, of practical wisdom and knowledge of men, such as extended experience only will give.

Second, Teachers.

The word "teachers" is employed in the New Testament as the designation of men in the churches whose special work was public religious instruction. It is so used 1 Cor. xii. 28—"God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers"—where the word, while doubtless including evangelists and pastors, evidently extends to all whose official work is Christian teaching. Probably, also, in Eph. iv. 11—"He gave some, apostles, some, prophets, some, evangelists, and some, pastors and teachers"—the word has like breadth of meaning, designating men not pastors who publicly taught the word. There are many endowed with teaching power whose gifts the churches, according to New Testament example, utilize in positions other than the pastoral office. They are called to various departments of work as secretaries and agents of missionary and benevolent organizations, as instructors in institutions of learning, as authors and editors engaged in creating and diffusing a Christian literature, and as laborers in other positions in which there is occasion for the exercise of ministerial functions; and they are, therefore, often ordained to preach and administer ordinances. On this class of ministers we submit the following remarks:

1. Teachers, like evangelists, have no official authority

as governing officers in the church. They are members, with all the rights and duties of membership, and differ from others only as empowered to preach and to administer ordinances. They are amenable, as others, to the discipline of the church, except that those who have received ordination through the action of a Council should not be divested of the ministerial office except by another Council. They have no right to ignore the ordinary obligations of church membership in pecuniary support, attendance on meetings, and personal devotion to church-work, but rather, from their conspicuous position, they are required to be in these things examples and leaders in the church. 2. This class of ministers in a church always stand in relations to the pastor of peculiar delicacy. Though without official authority, their character and gifts often give them great influence in the church and in society. Much care, therefore, should be used to avoid any intrusion on the prerogatives of the pastor. For example, in marriages and funerals within the bounds of his own church it is ordinarily proper that the pastor should officiate; only very unusual circumstances will justify a minister in allowing himself to set aside the pastor in such services. In the public and social worship of the church he should beware of taking too prominent a place or of occupying too much time, or of obtruding himself into the business and discipline of the church in such manner as to embarrass the pastor. In all relations in the church and in social life he should accord the pastor the just precedence which belongs to his official position, and his influence should be scrupulously used to encourage the pastor's work and strengthen the pastor's hands. Resident ministers may thus become to the pastor a source, not of discomfort and embarrassment, but of blessing and

strength. 3. In the absence of the pressure of obligation which a pastoral charge brings, the minister is in danger of a secularized spirit, which weakens in him the sense of spiritual realities and impairs his power in the public ministration of the gospel. To prevent this he should earnestly cultivate in his own soul the ministerial spirit, and should avoid all social or business entanglements which may either militate against his own spiritual life, or may weaken his influence as a minister in the community. The secretary or agent whose work calls him from home has need of special care lest, in the constant changes incident to travel, he lose habits of personal private devotion and of biblical and theological study. It is possible thus to retrograde in spiritual character and power, even when pleading the holiest of causes. Indeed, in such an itinerant life, the mind, thus in constant contact with the churches and the ministry, may well be on its guard lest it allow itself to be filled with the current ministerial and church gossip, and yield to the temptation to pass from church to church bearing this rather than "the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ." Few positions afford such large opportunities to carry blessing to pastors and churches as that of the secretary or agent of our benevolent societies. In counselling the young or the perplexed pastor, in healing divisions in churches and removing misunderstandings between pastors and their people, in inspiring and guiding the action of Associations and other public bodies, their position gives them great power, and opens before them a wide field for beneficent influence. Such men were Alfred Bennett, John Peck, and many others in the past—men whose presence was felt as a benediction in the churches, and whose words gave everywhere an impulse to the spiritual life; and such also are many of those who now fill that responsible office.

Third, Licentiates.

There are many persons whose gifts qualify them for usefulness in the occasional or the stated preaching of the word, but whose age or attainments or needs do not make it expedient to ordain them. To such it is usual to give a license, authorizing them to preach either within the bounds of the church, or, more widely, wherever Providence may open the door. This confers no authority to administer ordinances; the only ministerial function it authorizes is that of preaching and conducting public worship. Here I suggest: 1. It is evident that such a license should be given only with wise discrimination. A man of unsound judgment, of defective knowledge of the Scriptures, or of doubtful moral and religious character should never be accredited as a preacher of the gospel, however strong may be his personal impressions of duty or attractive his address in the eyes of the multitude. In the end he will be likely to injure rather than aid the cause of religion. The want of caution in hastily or thoughtlessly granting a license has often resulted in introducing to the sacred office men whose career has been calamitous to themselves and to the churches. 2. No man should, ordinarily, venture to preach without a license or some form of authorization from the church. Every Christian, it is true, is required, in his sphere, to publish the gospel; but this surely does not empower him to assume the office of the public ministry. A call from God in the soul of the man is, it may be admitted, the matter of prime moment in a call to preach; but an inward impression of duty to preach certainly gives no right to the ministerial function, unless it be confirmed by the church, the divinely-constituted judge of qualification. To enter on the public work of the ministry self-moved and self-appointed has no warrant in

Scripture or in reason, and is an act of assumption and disorder which can only result in evil. 3. Churches and pastors, while using a wise discretion, should carefully seek out and develop ministerial gifts. Much power doubtless remains latent which with proper care might be developed and utilized in ministerial work. Many a Christian life now left undeveloped, might be greatly enlarged by being thus placed in its true sphere of activity; and many a waste place within the bounds of our churches, under the culture of a licentiate, might be made to glow with spiritual life and beauty. It is surely one of the highest duties of a church to recognize and make effective the gifts Christ has bestowed on it; and among these none are of greater moment than the gift of ministerial power.

SECTION XVII.

PASTORAL STUDY.

Study is an oft-repeated injunction on the Christian ministry: "Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all" (1 Tim. iv. 15); "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. ii. 15). The reasons for this are obvious. Knowledge is everywhere power. The ministry, from their position, are the natural leaders in religious thought. To command respect they must be men of mental grasp and activity, and must be in advance of the thinking of those around them. Besides, no other profession is so heavily tasked for brain exertion. The Senate, the Bar, and the Platform only occasionally demand the highest efforts of the intellect. But the pulpit

requires weekly its elaborate sermons. They must have freshness, originality, force, or the pastor loses his hold on the people. And this exhaustive drain on his resources continues steadily year after year. No man can meet such demands without constant, earnest study. He must be ever growing. His mental processes must be ceaselessly active, pushing into new realms of investigation, gathering new materials for thought, increasing his discipline, and making him a broader, richer, deeper man.

In the life of a pastor two extremes are to be avoided. On the one hand, he is not to be a mere book-worm, secluded in his study, with no practical, living contact and sympathy with life around him. Some ministers of large literary culture have been comparatively useless from want of living connection between their thinking and the real needs of the busy actual world in which they lived. On the other hand, a minister may not be a mere desultory man, a gossip from house to house, occupied with newspapers and magazines, skimming the surface of popular thinking in ephemeral books that may attract his fancy, but neglecting the severer processes of self-culture essential to mental growth. Instability in the pastoral office is often a result of this. Freshness, originality in thought and expression, is lost, and the people, weary of repetitions and empty platitudes, cease to respect and love the pulpit. The grand object to be sought, then, is to combine the student and the pastor—a mind growing in knowledge and power by habitual work in the study, and growing in executive ability and social force by constant activity in the church and contact with the people. To secure this there must be a system—a system wisely formed and steadily pursued. What shall this system be? In answering this I propose to pursue two lines of suggestion—the method of study and the subjects of study.

First, the Method.

1. *Be a student everywhere.* The pastor's business is to deal with the human mind and the actual experiences of men; he should, therefore, go through the world with his eyes and ears open, thoroughly studying men and life around him. In the street, in society, in the social meeting, the mind is to be ceaselessly at work, observing character, studying phases of experience and life, and gathering materials for mental work. Many of the best trains of thought, most interesting views of Scripture, and most effective illustrations will be suggested in conversations and in the prayer-room. No man can afford to lose these; for, springing as they do from direct contact with the people, such trains of thought are most likely to meet the wants of the congregation and deal with the questions most vital to them. The studious pastor who preserves these texts and thoughts and illustrations as they occur will be surprised to find how rapidly they accumulate, and how fresh and rich they often render his thinking and instruction.

2. *Have a book always on hand.* Every life has its spare moments, and much may be added in culture and knowledge by a right use of them. Most of the current literature of the day, and much in standard biography, history, science, poetry, and art can be read in this way, if the right book is at hand. A half, or even a quarter, of an hour each day will accomplish the reading of a large number of volumes in a year; and if these are well selected, they will greatly add to the minister's breadth and intelligence, while they will refresh rather than exhaust his mind.

3. *Consecrate a specific part of each day to severe systematic work in the privacy of the study.* The habit of general observation and reading, before suggested, can be no

adequate substitute for this. The time thus appointed for hard study should be sacredly devoted, and no ordinary occurrence be allowed to interrupt. The advantages of this are obvious. (1.) A habit once fixed is an ever-increasing power. The mind acts with greater rapidity and force when the habit of study at fixed, regularly recurring periods is formed. Instead of spending hours in vain attempts to fix attention and concentrate thought on the subject in hand, the mind enters at once with full energy into work. The more fixed and long continued the habit, the more easy, rapid, and powerful the mental processes. This is one secret of the immense amount of brain-work performed by some men: by fixed habits they instantly concentrate mental force, and work at white heat. (2.) If these hours are once fixed, and are fully understood by the people, they will ordinarily be free from interruption. The congregation will conform to the pastor's plan, and will respect his fidelity in preparing for their instruction on the Lord's Day. What part of the day should be selected for the study cannot be determined by any rule; it must depend partly on the minister's habits, and partly on the necessities of his position. Ordinarily, the morning is best. The liability to interruption is less, and it leaves the afternoons and evenings free for visitation, meetings, and social life.

Let me add, nothing but a high ideal of the ministry and a fixed purpose to realize it will enable a pastor to persist in such a course of study. He must believe in it as a solemn duty he owes his God, his people, and himself, or he will fail. Indolence is often fostered by a false dependence on genius or on the spur of the occasion to give effectiveness and brilliancy to public utterances. Unthoughtful hearers, also, will often praise the off-hand, unstudied sermons and discourage elaborate preparation.

Besides this, there are obstacles to study in the pastor's work. He has cares connected with the sick, the afflicted, the erring; executive work in the organization and discipline of the church; and duties he owes society in the varied relations of life. These are often pressing, and the danger is that they crowd into the hours for study. Many a man circumscribes his own intellectual growth and pulpit power, making himself permanently a narrower and weaker man, by allowing these outside cares to destroy his processes of mental discipline and growth. Here nothing will overcome but a profound conviction that study—persistent, regular, life-long study—is the solemn, first duty of every man who ventures to stand up in the pulpit as an instructor of the people. Let other duties have their place, but the first, the most imperative duty of him who teaches others is to teach himself.

Second, the Subjects.

Let us suppose that the pastor has fixed his hours and made them sacred to severe, thorough mental labor; what shall he study? I answer: Not his sermons only. A grave mistake is often made here. The whole time is devoted to sermon preparation, leaving no room for general culture, biblical investigation, or theological studies. As the result, the mind becomes empty and barren. It lacks material for thought. The man is perpetually pouring out, but never pouring in, and the vessel becomes empty. He faithfully grinds at the mill, but puts nothing into the hopper. Some conscientious, hardworking thinkers in this way fail as preachers. They have no freshness. The mind runs perpetually in the same grooves and moves always in the same narrow circle, whereas, if they were reading, investigating, looking on subjects from new stand-

points and receiving the mental impulses which contact with other thinkers gives, the mind would be ever growing, ever enriching itself, and the sermons would be full of fresh and interesting views of truth.

Three objects are to be sought in the study: general culture, biblical and theological investigation, and sermon preparation.

I. General Culture.

By this I mean studies adapted to the development of the whole man. The pastor is not to be, in the narrow, technical sense, a mere theologian. He should seek to be a man of broad culture, developing his nature on every side and forming a full, symmetrical manhood. To accomplish this his studies must take a wide range, and open to him all those great realms of truth which science, philosophy, poetry, and history reveal.

1. *The sciences.* The pastor should not, indeed, turn aside from his sacred work to become a devotee to science. But in this age of scientific investigation, when the problems of science are so largely occupying public thought and so vitally touching the profoundest questions in religion, and the applications of science are so marvellously transforming our whole civilization and life, surely, at such a time, the man who stands up weekly to instruct the people, assuming to lead public thought, ought not to be ignorant of the results that science has reached, although he may not stop to pursue the processes of scientific inquiry. Astronomy, geology, botany, chemistry, each open a new world of truth, pouring light on the interpretation of God's word and abounding in richest illustrations of the sacred themes of the pulpit. Standard works on these and related sciences are within the reach of every pastor, and even one on each of them,

carefully read, would greatly enrich and enlarge his thinking.

2. *Philosophy, or the science of mind.* The preacher undoubtedly mistakes when he aspires to the character of a philosopher, and turns aside from his direct and earnest work for souls to lose himself in dialectics or the mazes of metaphysical speculation. But his work as a minister is to deal with the human soul—to influence the mind by reasoning, by persuasion, by the array of motives; and mind, therefore, in its powers and the methods of influencing it, may well constitute one of his life-studies. It is here he comes in contact with the master-spirits in the world of thought—minds which have controlled the thinking of the ages—Plato and Aristotle, Descartes and Bacon, Leibnitz and Locke. In the pressure of a pastor's life all these cannot be read, but a few choice, standard works on mental science, such as Hamilton, Mansel, McCosh, and Porter, may surely be read and carefully digested.

3. *Æsthetic culture.* God has not made us mere logical machines, but beings of taste, imagination, sensibility, to be moved by objects of beauty. Much of God's book is in poetry addressed to the imagination, and the universe around us is crowded with endless forms of the beautiful. Where a cold, impassive logic fails, truth often comes with resistless power through the imagination and the sensibilities. The cultivation of this side of our nature is essential to the development of a full manhood, and is important alike to pastoral and pulpit power. For this, one of the best means is the careful reading of the greater poets, the mighty creative minds whose works have stood the test of ages. Among the last occupations of that magnificent man, the late Dr. Wayland, was the re-reading of Shakespeare and Milton; and these wonderful creations of

genius afforded his ripened mind the richest instruction and keenest enjoyment.

4. *History and general literature.* Historical study should, without doubt, find no small place in this general culture. It enlarges the whole range of thought, shedding light on God's vast plan of providence and grace, and thus interpreting the Bible; while in all its wide extent it is filled with illustrations adapted to enforce the truths of the gospel. Nor should the higher class of works in fiction be excluded, for they often have great value, both for their delineations of character and life and for the culture they give to the imagination.

Now, in respect to this general culture, the points I here emphasize are, that it should be systematically and earnestly prosecuted, and that on all the subjects studied only the standard, thoroughly-tested authors should be read. Such a plan of reading, steadily pursued year after year, will make an ever-growing mind, developing symmetrically on every side into a noble, intellectual manhood. It only requires conscientious earnestness and persistency. The time wasted by some ministers in mental dissipation over newspapers and ephemeral literature would suffice to put them into communion with those master-minds of the ages, and secure the culture and wealth found in these highest realms of thought.

II. Biblical and Theological Culture.

The great work of a pastor is instruction in the truths of the Bible; and wherever else he may fail, he must at least be a master in the gospel. Ignorance on some of the topics already mentioned, though unfortunate, may still be tolerated, but in the man who ventures into the pulpit as a public instructor in the Bible a want of biblical knowledge and the utterance of crude, undiscriminat-

ing statements of truth can never be excused. No mere rhetorical power or seeming earnestness can atone for a want of thorough mastery of the themes of the pulpit. Biblical and theological investigation should, therefore, have a large place in the pastor's plan of study.

1. *Here, first of all, and most important, is the direct study of the Bible, bringing the mind into living contact with God's word.* As students in the Hebrew and Greek, let a part of each day be given to careful, critical study of the Scriptures in the divine originals as they were indited by the Holy Spirit. No translation, however perfect, can possibly give one the whole impression of the original. A little careful work each day in reading the original Scriptures will soon make the process easy and delightful, and its value is above all price. But, whether in the inspired original or in a version, the Bible should be carefully studied. It is God's own word, the great instrument of his power, "the sword of the Spirit." The Holy Spirit works only through divine truth, and that must ever be the mightiest pulpit which most fully and clearly unfolds these living words of God. (1.) As accessory to biblical interpretation, I suggest the study of the geography and history of Bible lands. The power to localize the characters and events of Scripture and place them in their historical surroundings is of the highest importance. Thus, in reading the Pentateuch and earlier historical books, how much more vividly are the events conceived if you are familiar with the localities in Egypt, the desert, and Palestine; or in reading Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel if you have clear ideas of the place and history of Assyria and Babylon; or in the New Testament if you have studied the condition and localities of the Roman Empire, then dominant! For this such works as Smith's *Old and New Testament History*, Rawlinson's *Five Ancient Monarchies*, and

Milman's *History of the Jews* or Stanley's *Jewish Church*, would furnish the historical information, while a good biblical atlas, kept always open before you, would give the needed maps. Full historical and topographical discussions will be found in Smith's *Bible Dictionary*, Robinson's *Biblical Researches*, or Thomson's *Land and the Book*. (2.) The Bible, I also suggest, should be studied in its unity. The book of God, from Genesis to Revelation, is one whole, from first to last unfolding, by successive steps, one system of truth and method of redemption. It is not a mere fortuitous collection of sacred writings, but one grand revelation from God, each part related to every other and essential to the whole. The types and prophecies and symbols of the earlier Scriptures contain the germs of the later gospel, and no man will thoroughly understand the one Testament without a careful study of the other. This interior, vital unity in the several parts of Scripture is developed in such works as Fairbairn's *Typology* and the *Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation*. (3.) The books of the Bible should be studied in their chronological and historical connection. Suppose one is studying the prophecy of Isaiah: he will ascertain its meaning far more clearly if he have carefully studied the period when Isaiah lived, the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah as given in Kings and Chronicles. Or suppose he is reading the Epistles of Paul: their interpretation will be far more clear if he have studied the character of Paul and the circumstances under which he wrote as they are developed in the Acts and the Epistles, aided by such a work as Conybeare and Howson's *Life and Epistles of St. Paul*. (4.) The Bible should also be studied analytically. A cursory reading of the Scriptures does not interpret them; they must be carefully analyzed if one would penetrate into their full meaning. For example, one is reading Romans; he begins.

"Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, which he had promised before by his prophets in holy Scripture, concerning his Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord; who was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, but declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." Now analyze or extract the propositions here contained. It is affirmed here of Paul, 1. That he is a servant (*doulos*) of Jesus Christ; 2. That he is a divinely-called apostle; 3. That as an apostle he is set apart unto the gospel of God. It is said of the gospel, 1. That it was foreannounced by the prophets in Holy Scripture; 2. That its subject-matter is concerning Jesus Christ our Lord. It is declared of Christ, 1. That as to his flesh, or human nature, he descended from David; 2. That as to his spirit of holiness, or divine nature, he was clearly shown to be the Son of God by the fact of his resurrection. Now, the man who will patiently, steadily work out such an analysis of God's word as he studies it will penetrate the heart of it, and its richness will astonish him. The great thoughts of God will be laid open to his view as they never can be to the careless, superficial reader; and if, with such biblical work in the study, the pastor devotes a part of the Lord's Day either to expository preaching or to a lecture in his Bible school, this direct connection of the work of the study with that of the pulpit will add interest and force to both.

2. *In the study of the Christian doctrines it is, first of all, important to have a system.* This plan of work should be so arranged that in a course of years, taking one subject at a time, the pastor may make a thorough investigation of all the leading topics. As the basis take such a work as Hodge's *Outlines of Theology*, or any good compendium of theology, and, following the order of subjects, work in each

until its main points have been mastered. For illustration, suppose the subject is the doctrine of inspiration. First work out carefully the questions in your chosen text-book, and read some of the best authors on the subject, as Lee, Woods, Gaussen, and Hodge. All the points involved will thus be brought distinctly before the mind. Then collect the leading passages of Scripture bearing on it, and examine each critically and patiently and note down your own impressions. Follow this by writing a full and careful statement of your own view as the result of the investigation. Or suppose the subject to be that great central doctrine of the gospel, the atonement. After working out the questions as presented in your text-book, and reading the best authors accessible to you, so as to become master of the vital points, then examine the priesthood and sacrifices of the Old Testament, the predictions of the atonement in prophecy, and the passages bearing on this doctrine in the New Testament. Having thus before you the elements of a decision, write out fully your own view. Such a process of theological investigation, steadily pressed year after year, and connected as it would be with the reading of the great masters in theology, could not fail to make the pastor a clear, strong religious thinker and his pulpit a power in leading religious thought. Let me also urge the study of the history of doctrines in connection with such a course of theological investigation. Take such a work as Hagenbach's or Shedd's *History of Doctrines*, in which the course of theological thinking on each of the great truths of the Bible is traced through the ages, and the varying phases of the doctrine through successive periods, and the forms in which it has been held by the world's profoundest thinkers are presented. Such a study is wonderfully stimulating to thought, and affords a broader basis for the forma-

tion of opinions. If also, in direct connection with this investigation of a great truth, the pastor should preach on the leading points involved in it, he would greatly add to the definiteness of his own views, while the work of the study would thus come into the work of the pulpit, enhancing the interest and power of the sermons.

III. Sermon Preparation.

The preparation of sermons should doubtless fill the chief place in these hours of private study. This subject, however, belongs to the department of homiletics, and will be found amply treated in works specially devoted to it, such as Broadus on the *Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*, Shedd's *Homiletic and Pastoral Theology*, and the several courses of *Yale Lectures on Preaching*. I will, therefore, on this topic only emphasize the importance of high ideals of sermonizing and pulpit preparation.

The sermon is the embodied result of the pastor's culture and reading, the public expression of his whole spiritual and intellectual manhood, and he is bound to show himself "a workman who needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim. ii. 15). He dishonors Christ and his gospel if he habitually preaches without thorough study.

The sermon is the message God sends by him to the people. It unfolds high and holy themes, into which "angels desire to look," and on which the profoundest minds of the ages have dwelt with wonder and awe. It deals with the souls of men and the great interests of eternity. Surely, the man who ventures to stand up and speak carelessly and thoughtlessly on such themes and amidst such interests has failed to grasp the primary idea of his great office as a Christian pastor.

SECTION XVIII.

PASTORAL RESPONSIBILITY.

The pastor, in a true and important sense, is entrusted with the care of the souls of his congregation; he is, therefore, under obligation to use his utmost power for their conversion and sanctification, "warning every man and teaching every man," that he "may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus" (Col. i. 28). Paul said to the Ephesian elders: "Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he has purchased with his own blood" (Acts xx. 28); and in exhorting the people on their part to obey the ministry, he urges as a reason, "for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account" (Heb. xiii. 17). This responsibility plainly includes: 1. *A personal life such that it may constitute a fitting example.* The pastor is to be "an example of the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (1 Tim. iv. 12). Thus, Paul ever referred to his own life, not as perfect, but as publicly exemplifying the Christian character, saying to the Philippians (ch. iv. 9): "Those things which ye have both learned and received, and heard, and seen in me, do; and the God of peace shall be with you;" and to the Thessalonians (1 Thess. ii. 10), "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblamably we behaved ourselves among you that believe." A defective, irregular life in the pastor neutralizes the ablest efforts in the pulpit, and may become a preeminent means of the ruin of souls. 2. *Wise and faithful dealing with the individual souls of his charge.* Paul went "from house to house," from soul to soul: he "ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears," and he pro-

poses this as an example of ministerial fidelity, requiring the pastor to be "instant in season, out of season." Evidently he did not regard the work of the minister as done when performed only in the study and the pulpit: it included personal dealing with souls. 3. *Earnest effort to become an able minister of the New Testament.* The most solemn urgencies press on the pastor the duty of seeking the highest possible intellectual and pulpit power. The themes he unfolds are the grandest that can engage the thought of man or angel. The end to be secured—the salvation of souls—is the most momentous ever committed to a finite being. God will not hold guiltless the indolent, reckless minister who causes the gospel to be despised and imperils the souls of his people by a careless, unstudied presentation of the message he has entrusted to him. 4. *The faithful declaration of the whole counsel of God.* He is to show distinctly the threatenings as well as the promises of the gospel, and the danger as well as the hopes set before the soul. No subject is to be avoided because unpopular or distasteful. No personal considerations are to prevent the plain, distinct enunciation of all the words of God. Jehovah says to the watchman: "If thou doest not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand" (Ezek. xxxiii. 8; iii. 17–21).

Pastoral responsibility, however, has its limitation. Christ does not require of his servants impossible labor; but as they have received their talents, so they are to use them, each "according to his several ability." If faithful to his trust, the pastor is "unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish" (2 Cor. ii. 15–17), and it is his right to feel that he has "delivered his soul" and is "pure from the blood of all men" (Acts xx. 26, 27). Such was the ministry of Paul, a mere man,

aided in this only by such divine help as is promised to every other servant of God. It is fidelity, not success, which constitutes the limit of responsibility. Success belongs to God. Paul plants, Apollos waters, but God gives the increase. Jeremiah spoke with the earnestness and tenderness of lips inspired, but he was unpopular, and, as men would measure, unsuccessful; nevertheless, his name stands high among the ancient worthies, because in that degenerate age he was faithful to his trust and work. Besides, a minister's power is not measured by the immediate, outward result. The powerful revival in which hundreds are gathered into the church finds its occasion, indeed, in the peculiar gifts of some popular preacher, but its real causes often lie hid in the quiet, patient toil of other men differently gifted. Every man has his special adaptation and work—one sows and another reaps—and only in the great harvest at the end of the world will the actual results of each man's work appear. Hence, Christ says to every servant of his: "Be thou *faithful* unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life" (Rev. ii. 10). Fidelity, then, is the limit of responsibility; and the earnest pastor who, with heartfelt loyalty to Christ, has to the extent of his ability and opportunity faithfully fulfilled his calling, may know assuredly that he has the approval of the Master, and that awaiting him at the end is the sure reward of the faithful.

SECTION XIX.

THE OUTER LIFE OF A PASTOR.

The Scriptures require in the pastor a model life. He is to be "an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (1 Tim.

iv. 12). As the leader of the flock his outward life will be expected to evince a higher moral tone and furnish a more marked exemplification of Christian principles than that of the private Christian, because his office constitutes him an example, and the prominence of his position renders defects in him especially conspicuous and hurtful. Hence, Scripture is here explicit and emphatic: "A bishop, then, must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach: not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous: one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity (for if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?): not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must have a good report of them that are without, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil" (1 Tim. iii. 2–7).

I. Business Relations.

1. *Make no debts:* "Owe no man anything" (Rom. xiii. 8). In all purchases for personal and family purposes the pastor should pay as he buys. It cultivates a just economy and avoids debts, which often prove a heavy burden on a minister's life and a most serious drawback to his usefulness. No man is thoroughly independent in the pulpit who is facing a number of unpaid creditors. Ordinarily, this avoidance of debt is entirely feasible, and when understood to be a rule with the pastor it has a beneficial influence in promoting promptness in the payment of his salary. The people will respect such a course in their minister. At the very outset of life, then, let him fix it as a principle never to run in debt. A strict adherence to

this will sometimes involve inconvenience and self-denial, but these are more than compensated in the exemption from the anxieties and humiliations of debt, in the sense of independence, in the respect and confidence of the community, and, above all, in the clear conscience which observance of this rule secures. Only the most absolute necessity should ever set aside this rule, for the neglect of this is too frequently a cause of failure in the pastoral office.

2. *Use great care and all the proper forms in making business engagements.* The pastor is tempted to neglect business forms on the supposition that as a minister he ought to rely on the honor and consideration of those with whom he deals, and as the result, even where there is no dishonesty, there is often misunderstanding, out of which grow heartburnings and disputes. All business transactions, therefore, should be conducted in a business way, leaving no room for misapprehensions, and then all engagements should be met with promptness and honor. A pastor should be delicately sensitive to his reputation in this, for any failure, though it be only an apparent one, in fulfilling a business obligation is sure to provoke unfavorable comment and militate against usefulness.

3. *Live within your income.* A pastor may not be reckless in regard to the probable future needs of himself and of those dependent on him. Such a course is justified neither by Scripture nor by Providence. "The Lord ordained that they who preach the gospel should live of the gospel" (1 Cor. ix. 14). A minister, therefore, should find a life-support in his income from his work, and should so use his salary that a part be laid aside for coming days of need. If the salary is small, he should rigidly cut down expenses that some of it may be reserved. Special exigences in life will, indeed, sometimes prevent

this, but ordinarily it is feasible, and in the case of the head of a family it is plainly a most sacred duty. The neglect of care to make provision for those dependent on us is not faith, but recklessness.

Here, however, a pastor must beware of covetousness. Instances sometimes occur in which this just and necessary regard for future need degenerates into a selfish greed for accumulation which narrows and belittles the minister of Christ. He compromises his dignity and independence by seeking in various ways gifts from his people, and thus the man is sunk in the mendicant, or he degrades his office by descending to petty meannesses, driving close bargains in business and shirking his just share in the contributions for church-work and benevolence. Nowhere is the love of money more offensive than in the Christian minister.

II. Political Relations.

1. A pastor should always himself exercise the elective franchise, and should encourage Christians to do so; in no other way can we have a Christian government. On this continent the great experiment is in progress of a government strictly by the people, and in the absence of religion and virtue it must prove a failure. Christian men should not neglect their duties as citizens; it imperils the life of the nation and the welfare of the Christian cause. The pulpit, therefore, should press on the church the duty of seeking the elevation of good men to official station. 2. As a pastor the minister is bound to refuse all party obligations and all partisan use of pastoral influence; for he is pastor of the whole church, chosen and supported without reference to political distinctions among the members. But as an individual he is entitled to his political preferences and his just political

influence; with this the church has no right to interfere. At the same time, it is wise for the pastor to avoid excited political discussions, especially in public places, and quietly to exercise his political rights and perform the duties of a citizen 3. When public questions have a strictly moral side, I think the pulpit should not be silent, but should seek, as on moral questions in general, to give direction to public sentiment in favor of honesty, truth, and virtue. Occasional sermons, therefore, presenting the obligations of citizens and applying the moral teachings of Christianity to questions on which Christian citizens are called to act, are the duty of the pastor; but the time and manner and spirit of such sermons require the exercise of the most careful judgment.

III. Social Character and Relations.

Two extremes are here to be avoided—the one, in which the pastor lives a recluse life, isolated from the life of the people and unfelt in directing the currents of thought and feeling around him; the other, in which he maintains a loose, familiar intercourse with all society, lounging about in public places, a "hail-fellow-well-met" with everybody. Avoiding these extremes, a pastor should never allow himself to be a cipher in social life, but should make himself a vital force controlling and elevating it. The gravity of his character and work, however, requires him to use special care in regard to deportment and associations. He is, indeed, to be and to act out himself, but, while true to his own nature as a man, he is so to control it as never to forget his character and office as a minister of God. Here I offer the following suggestions:

1. The minister should be, always and everywhere, the unaffected Christian gentleman, showing all courtesy to

all men. It is here some fail, and either through a neglect of the courtesies and amenities of social life render themselves repulsive, or by a stiff and artificial manner of observing them, without geniality and warmth, make themselves unapproachable. Men ordinarily and justly regard manners as an index of character. Good manners, therefore, cannot be put on from without; they spring from a sense of the relations we bear to others and a disposition to act in accordance with them. A kindly, unselfish heart, a quick, keen sympathy, a sensitive regard for others' rights and feelings; a ready, generous appreciation of the excellences of others, and a tender charity for their faults and foibles—in short, a well-developed Christian manhood, with refined sensibilities, noble, pure, upright, transparent, touching life on every side, and fitted to bless whatever it touches,—this is the only real basis of correct manners. The cultivation of such a character, therefore, is the prime necessity, for in this will exist all the instincts of the true gentleman from which the gentlemanly manner spontaneously results.

2. In the matter of dress. I do not know that any law of propriety requires the minister to be distinguished either in the cut or the color of his garments. Many, however, prefer some kind of ministerial costume as a matter of convenience to indicate everywhere their vocation, and this is, of course, a subject to be left wholly to individual preference. The principle to be insisted on as important is that the dress be not such as to arrest special attention, as suggesting foppishness and fastidiousness on the one hand, or carelessness and slovenliness on the other. The man, not the dress, should arrest and hold attention.

3. In conversation he should be genial, courteous, affable, avoiding that tone and manner of condescension which carries in it an implied sense of superiority, and

exhibiting that breadth of intelligence and culture which will secure respect for his views in general society. Slang phrases, vulgar anecdotes, boisterous discussions, idle gossip, and scandal, it is hardly necessary to say, ill become a pastor, and will in the end seriously militate against his usefulness. Coarseness, indelicacy, and all that is suggestive of impurity should be scrupulously avoided; such words, when uttered by a minister, live and fester in the memory, and are destructive of all pastoral influence afterward over those who hear them. "An obscene story, a lewd double *entendre*, a filthy joke, a questionable word or gesture, a sentence that would make a pure woman blush in public or in private, in select or in a mixed company, is a burning shame and scandal to any minister of the gospel." Nor should his chief distinction in society be that of the wit or mimic. Wit and humor, when natural, are often elements of real power, as giving sparkle and flavor to speech, but in the pastor their place is subordinate; when they appear as his chief characteristic, they inevitably injure his influence. Attractive social qualities, such as enable the pastor to exercise a leading and governing power in society, are to be most earnestly sought; their effect on pastoral usefulness can hardly be overstated.

The minister, when a guest, enjoying the temporary hospitality of a family circle, should bring into it the blessing of a genial, sunshiny spirit, showing always a thorough appreciation of kindness received and avoiding all unnecessary trouble to the hosts. If other ministers are present, beware of that ministerial clannishness which centres conversation on topics adapted only to ministers or makes it consist of ministerial criticism, gossip, and scandal adapted to lower the estimation in which other ministers are held. In the freedom and *abandon* of min-

isterial society there is often much temptation to this, but words thus thoughtlessly spoken sometimes do incalculable injury, both by lowering the ministerial character in the eyes of the household, and by inflicting an incurable wound on the reputation of those made the subjects of gossip. The injunction of Scripture cannot be too carefully heeded: "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt" (Col. iv. 6); for thus the spirit you breathed and the words you spake will remain a benediction with that household, and make your memory fragrant there for ever.

4. In his amusements and recreations a pastor should indulge only in such as are not only in themselves innocent, but are not commonly offensive to the Christian conscience. The grand principle of self-denial enunciated by Paul as the rule of his own life is here, undoubtedly, the guiding principle of ministerial duty. He says: "Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God: even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved" (1 Cor. x. 32, 33). He relinquished self-gratification, even though innocent, rather than put a cause of stumbling before others and hinder their salvation. Recreation is doubtless a necessity—the bow always bent loses its spring—but recreation should never be taken in a form which may give offence to Christian souls, or which may set an example such as, if followed by others, might work their injury. A pastor's influence also may be impaired by undue absorption in any form of recreation. There is no wrong, it may be, in using a good horse, in playing a game of ball or croquet, in fishing or hunting, or many other forms of recreation; but the pastor who is specially distinguished for his interest in fast horses or for his sporting habits, or as a devotee of amuse-

ments, violates most seriously the proprieties of his position, and sinks in the estimation of all thoughtful people.

5. A minister's associations or special intimacies should not be with bad or loose or irreligious men; the taint will necessarily tarnish and injure his own reputation, even if it does not corrupt his character. He is to be "a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate" (Tit. i. 8). He should show all courtesy and kindness, indeed, to even the worst men around him, but his special friendships should not be sought there, nor his habitual associations. Some ministers have here made wreck of their influence with the better classes in the community, while their association with the loose and irreligious class, so far from winning them to Christ, has only the more hardened them in rejecting him by lowering in their eyes the character of his servant.

6. The pastor's relations with the other sex should not only always be pure in fact, but should also be such as to avoid even the possibility of misconstruction. No point needs to be more carefully guarded, for even the suspicion or thought of wrong in this, however ill-grounded, is commonly fatal to usefulness, and often follows him through the remainder of life.

IV. Personal Habits.

The pastor is expected to be a model Christian gentleman, showing the refinement, delicacy, and culture which the gospel inculcates and produces, and improper habits, therefore, in him are more prominent and influential for evil than in other men. Now and then a minister exhibits a foolish *bravado* of public opinion by affecting brusque, uncouth, eccentric manners and indulging in questionable habits under the mistaken supposition that, in thus setting at defiance the common sentiments of mankind in regard to the proprieties of ministerial life,

he is showing moral courage and manhood; nor are there wanting equally foolish people who will applaud this contemptible exhibition of personal vanity. But, apart from such exceptional cases, the ministerial life is always beset by strong temptations to unbecoming habits. Thus:

1. *Intemperance in eating.* The studious life, as ordinarily pursued, often tends to dyspepsia and an unnatural craving for food. The bodily and mental vigor is often thus destroyed, while the obvious absence of self-restraint degrades the man in the eyes of others. The dulness of the pulpit and the ill-health of ministers are not seldom traceable to an overloaded stomach.

2. *The use of tobacco.* The highest medical authorities now agree that this is one of the common causes of nervous prostration and early mental decay. The late Prof. Moses Stuart says: "I do not place the use of tobacco in the same scale with that of ardent spirits. It does not make men maniacs and demons. But that it does undermine the health of thousands; that it creates a nervous irritability, and thus operates on the temper and moral character of men; that it often creates a thirst for spirituous liquors; that it allures to clubs and grog-shops and taverns, and thus helps to make idlers and spendthrifts; and finally, that it is a very serious and needless expense,—are things which cannot be denied by any observing and considerate person. And if all this be true, how can the habitual use of tobacco as a mere luxury be defended by any one who wishes well to his fellow-men or has a proper regard to his own usefulness?" The duty of self-conquest in respect to such a habit is evident especially in the minister, whose very office adds emphasis to his personal example; and the principle involved is strongly set forth by Paul when he says: "All things are lawful for me, but *I will not be brought under the power of any*" (1 Cor. vi.

12). He accounted it an unworthy and dangerous thing for a Christian to come under bondage to any bodily appetite. But he adds: "Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things: now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we, an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest by any means when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast-away" (1 Cor. ix. 25–27).

3. *The use of stimulants.* The pressure of intellectual work on the pastor often requires of him the most important public efforts when worn and depressed, and thus at times the temptation to stimulate is very strong. The fact of bodily weakness pleads for a stimulant as a medical necessity. Once indulged, stimulation readily passes into a habit, and the importance of the occasion is made an effectual plea for it as an alternative to failure. Now, in all such cases, the consciousness of self-indulgence, as it weakens self-respect, must needs also weaken the moral power of the minister. He feels himself enslaved and cannot speak with authority. While consciously and deliberately yielding to self-indulgence, how can he preach to others the moral teachings of the gospel? Such an indulgence, moreover, places the man in fearful peril, for it creates the necessity for repetition, and forms an appetite which in many instances has destroyed the man. Some of the most brilliant men in the ministry have here made an utter and terrible wreck of life.

Right habits are, therefore, of primary moment. A man can respect himself and secure the respect of others only as he exercises habitual self-control, holding passion and appetite in thorough subjection; without this the pastor lacks that consciousness of independence and that true manhood in which alone resides genuine moral power;

and his defects, made conspicuous and influential by his sacred office, may be disastrous in their influence on those around him.

SECTION XX.

THE PASTOR'S INNER LIFE.

Ancient asceticism, in demanding for the ministry a hidden life of communion with God, gave voice not only to one of the profoundest intuitions of the Christian consciousness, but also to one of the clearest teachings of Scripture. The men who deal with spiritual things must themselves be spiritual. Our age, while rightly rejecting a perverted asceticism, is tending to the opposite error. It is intensely practical. "Action!" is its watchword. This practicalness often becomes mere narrowness and shallowness. It overlooks the profounder laws of the Christian life. Spiritual force comes from within, from the hidden life of God in the soul. It depends, not on mere outward activities, but on the divine energies acting through the human faculties, God working through the man, the Holy Ghost permeating, quickening all the powers of the preacher, and speaking by his voice to the souls of the people. The soul's secret power with God thus gives public power with men, and the mightiest influences of the pulpit often flow from a hidden spring in the solitude of the closet; for a sermon is not the mere utterance of man: there is in it a power more than human. Its vital force comes from the Holy Spirit. Jesus said: "It is not *ye* that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you" (Matt. x. 20). Its spiritual energy springs from something deeper than logic and rhetoric. As Bushnell has well said: "Preaching is nothing else than the burst-

ing out of life which has first burst in or up from where God is among the soul's foundations."

Such was the teaching of Christ. In his farewell words to his disciples he promised "another Comforter"—one who should take his place among them and abide with them for ever. As he had walked with them an Instructor, Friend, Helper, so after his departure the Holy Spirit should dwell among them, teaching, inspiring, guiding them, a true and living divine Presence ever with them and mighty to help. Blessed as his own bodily presence had been, the presence of the Holy Spirit was of still higher moment, for he declared that it was better for them that he himself depart and the Spirit come; for the Spirit, whose office it is to take of Christ and show him, should reveal the Christ-presence within them in accordance with his promise: "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and *will manifest myself to him*" (John xiv. 21); "I will not leave you comfortless; *I will come to you*" (John xiv. 18). Without this divine Helper he expressly forbade their entrance on the ministry, and as his last charge before he ascended he said, "Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke xxiv. 49).

At the Pentecost the Holy Spirit descended, and how marvellous was his power! Plain as had been the words Jesus spake, the apostles yet utterly misconceived the most vital truths; but when the Spirit of truth came, the gospel, in its grandeur and power, stood clearly revealed before them. The men who before had timidly cowered in the presence of danger now rejoiced that they "were counted worthy to suffer shame" for the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts v. 41). They whose selfish ambition had aspired to be "greatest in the kingdom of heaven" now forgot their mean rivalries, and were inspired with single-hearted

consecration to the Master; and the multitudes who before had despised and rejected their words, now convicted "of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment," bowed before this unseen, mighty Power, and cried out, "Men and brethren, what must we do?" (Acts ii. 37).

Now, it is plain that the Holy Spirit, this special "power from on high," was promised, not to the apostles only, but to the ministry in all ages. In the New Testament period he dwelt, a living, quickening divine presence, in all the servants of Christ, revealing truth, inspiring faith, and making their words the power of God unto salvation. They prayed in the Spirit; they spake in the Spirit; they lived in the Spirit. The promise of Jesus was fulfilled: "Lo! I am with you alway" (Matt. xxviii. 20); for the Christ-presence was continually revealed in them—a revelation of him, not, indeed, to the eye, but to the soul, and unspeakably more blessed than had been his bodily presence when on earth. Not the apostle only, but every servant of God, could say: "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. ii. 20); and in the hour of peril, when all men forsook him, the Christian confessor triumphantly affirmed: "Notwithstanding, the Lord stood with me and strengthened me" (2 Tim. iv. 17). In every subsequent age the indwelling Spirit of God has been the fountain of power in the ministry; and the mightiest men in the pulpit, renouncing self-sufficiency, have confessed, with Paul: "Our sufficiency is of God, who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament" (2 Cor. iii. 5, 6). Conscious of need, they have turned their souls upward to God, and this divine Helper has entered and filled them; and all the faculties and culture of the man, intellectual, moral, and spiritual, have been transfused, elevated, enlarged, by this invisible but mighty Power. It has been truly said: "The virtue of an electric wire is not in the wire, but in

its connection with the voltaic battery. The power of the minister is not in the polish of his style, the pictorialness of his illustrations, the fervor of his manner, the order and arrangement of his discourse, but in his living connection with God and his capacity to act as a connecting-link between God and the human soul. It is God in the soul which is the secret of true pulpit power."

How, then, shall the pastor maintain an inner life such that he shall be "endued with power from on high" and God shall speak through him to the souls of men? In answering this I suggest as a means of chief importance:

I. The Habitual Practice of Secret Prayer.—For prayer is the bond which links the divine power with the human. It is the channel through which God pours his life into the soul. It is the uplifted hand of man's weakness taking hold on God's strength. It calls down from heaven the sacred fire, which alone may kindle the preacher's sacrifice. It has the most vital relations to the character and work of a pastor.

1. *The relation of secret prayer to the spirit and purpose of the ministry.*

Special dangers beset the pastor. The most sacred services, from their frequent recurrence, may come to be performed in a perfunctory spirit, and his life may thus degenerate into mere professionalism. Unconsciously he comes to meditate, read, and even pray with a view only to others and its effect on others. The sense of his personal relation to God is lost. As a public speaker a desire for popularity may unduly influence his preaching, and conspicuous position tempt his ambition, obscuring his vision of the great end of his ministry—the honor of Christ and the salvation of souls. The very respect which his office secures may foster spiritual pride and make him insensible to his defection in heart from God. Few men

are environed by such subtle and powerful seductions to a false life as the Christian minister, and against these only a vivid consciousness of his high calling is an adequate safeguard. He is God's ambassador, receiving his commission and his message, not from men, but from the Sovereign of heaven and earth. The souls of his congregation are entrusted to him, and the words he is charged to speak are the words of God's saving power. "In them that are saved" he is "a savor of life unto life," but "in them that perish" "a savor of death unto death" (2 Cor. ii. 15, 16). If faithful to his trust, he "shall shine as the brightness of the firmament" and "as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. xii. 3); if unfaithful, the blood of souls will be found on him in the day of God's inquisition. Now, only a distinct realization of these responsibilities as an ever-present, living force pervading his spirit will hold the minister in his inmost life true to Christ and to his work.

It is here prayer has its mightiest reflex power. It gives a vivid sense of God and of spiritual realities. It lifts the life above the control of lower motives to a loftier moral elevation, with a purer atmosphere and a broader horizon. The whole man is elevated, ennobled, transfused with divine life, as he holds communion with God. When Moses had been with God in the mount, his face shone with a glory such that Israel could not steadfastly look on it. It was when Jesus was praying that he was transfigured, "and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light" (Matt. xvii. 2). God imprints his own image on the soul that comes face to face with him.

The inner life of a preacher always stands revealed in the pulpit; it transfuses itself through his preaching. No mere declamation, no arts of rhetoric, no dramatic simulation of emotion, can conceal the absence of spiritual life. Moral earnestness can never be assumed; it is the attribute

only of a soul profoundly feeling the power and reality of divine truth. The man, therefore, who would speak God's word with the pungency and fervor of a Bunyan, a Baxter, a Flavel, or a Payson must, like them, be constant and fervent in prayer. The springs of spiritual life opened in the closet will pour forth never-failing streams of life in the pulpit. Luther said: "Prayer, meditation, and temptation make a minister." He himself is said to have spent three hours daily in prayer, and those mighty words which thrilled the heart of Christendom were the utterances of a soul thus glowing with the flames of devotion.

2. *The relation of secret prayer to the apprehension of spiritual truth.*

Spiritual truth is revealed only to the spiritual mind: "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; . . . neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. ii. 14). Spiritual susceptibility is the essential condition of apprehending spiritual truth. A soul instinct with divine life, sensitive to divine impressions, in sympathy with divine things—this, and this only, can enter into a realization of those great truths which constitute the gospel. Without this the very message the pastor is charged to preach he himself will fail to apprehend. He may, indeed, see the Christian doctrines through the eye of an impassive logic, but such a lifeless intellectualism, even when abstractly correct, has no power. The theology of the pulpit is a theology vitalized by prayer and glowing in the heart as a great, living reality. The hearts of men are most surely moved by living truths vividly realized in the speaker's soul. The love of God in the incarnation and death of his Son, the guilt and danger of the souls of men, the glories of the saved and the miseries of the lost,—these are not matters of cold intellection. To him who lives in the atmosphere of

prayer they stand out as vivid realities. Such men, like Paul, "believe, and therefore speak;" and in words of burning fervor they utter these great truths and press them on the souls of men. Payson, on his death-bed, said: "Prayer is the first thing, the second thing, the third thing, necessary for a minister." Whitefield spent hours of each day on his knees with God's word open before him, and it was from the audience-chamber of heaven he went forth to speak those marvellous words of power which stirred the souls of the multitude. These eternal truths thus passed in him beyond mere intellections; they took possession of the whole man, and he could but speak with tender pathos and holy boldness, as he saw light in God's light, and the spiritual world was thus all ablaze with light around him.

Jesus himself, the Chief Pastor, lived a life of ceaseless prayer. Pressed under the burden of souls, he waked while others slept. Sometimes he spent the whole night in prayer; at others, "rising up a great while before day," he sought communion with the Father.

> "Cold mountains and the midnight air
> Witnessed the fervor of his prayer."

And if he, the Sinless One, the God-man, must needs thus pray, if prayer was essential even to his inner life and to his power in the work assigned him, how much greater necessity must press on his weak, sinful servants! If communion with God filled so large a place in the life of the Chief Pastor, it surely should not have less place in the life of the under-shepherds.

II. The Habitual Self-Application and Self-Appropriation of Divine Truth.—The habit of viewing truth objectively in its relation to other truths or to other souls, rather than subjectively in its relation

to one's own soul, is one of the greatest dangers of the minister, because his work tends directly to keep uppermost in his thinking the needs of others. He may thus come to conceive vividly and to present strongly the most affecting and stupendous truths of the gospel without the least thought of their relation to himself and their bearing on his own life and destiny. Nor is he in this necessarily insincere. He has an actual and strong conception of the truth and of its pregnancy with weal or woe to others, and in pressing it he is true to his present conviction; but his conception of it is purely in its relation to others, and secures no application to his own spiritual wants. Now, God's only way, so far as we know, of saving and sanctifying an intelligent soul is through the truth; and this not truth conceived in the intellect as a mere object of thought, but truth conceived in the heart, entering into the centre of a man's being, and acting as a life-force in his deepest moral convictions and affections. "Born again by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Pet. i. 23), "Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth" (John xvii. 17), are passages which indicate an unvarying law of the gospel. All spiritual life comes from the Holy Spirit, acting through divine truth received into the soul. To this law God has not made the minister an exception. The measure of religious life in him, as in every man, is determined by the extent of this believing appropriation of divine truth and its consequent living power in him. He may be, therefore, a learned theologian, holding in his intellectual vision a wide range of truth, while yet, from failure in heart appropriation of it, he is a dwarf in vital spiritual development, because Christian life grows not from mere knowledge, but from truth believingly appropriated.

The pastor, therefore, should cultivate the habit of ap-

plying and appropriating to his own soul the truths he preaches. He should habitually look at them in their relation to himself, and take them into his own life by a distinct act of faith, which believingly, joyfully, appropriates them as belonging to him. Every truth thus received will become in him an added element of life, deepening and enlarging his religious consciousness and imparting a richer and more blessed experience. Then, from this fountain of life within, thus ever enlarged and enriched, he will present in the pulpit, not a dead system of doctrines, but a living gospel which shall come with fulness of life to the people.

III. An Habitual Self-Surrender and Consecration to Christ and his Work.—Selfishness, in its more insidious forms, endangers the life of a pastor. Outwardly, by office, he is consecrated to the service of Christ, and for this very reason he is less likely to detect, deep down at the springs of his living, the presence and power of a self-love, in the form of pride, envy, self-will, self-indulgence, and ambition, which may be, after all, the controlling force in his inner life. The danger is here the greater because, its growth having been unperceived, the man is unconscious of its control, and because, with all "the deceitfulness of sin," it lurks stealthily, but all the more potentially, within the sacred forms and associations of a consecrated office. Hence the necessity of frequent and rigid self-examination. A man must interrogate himself, and with careful introspection seek to detect the real forces that control his life. There should be pauses in his career when he will stand alone in the presence-chamber of the Omniscient One, and cry, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Ps. cxxxix. 23, 24). The best lives have found great value in such

special seasons privately set apart for fasting, prayer, and self-examination, as the navigator, in the perils of his voyage, stops to take observation of the sun and stars and make certain what is his position and whither the winds and currents are bearing him. Then, with vision thus clarified, and in full view of his real position, he should make a distinct renewal of self-dedication to God, giving up himself, with all he is and has, unreservedly to him.

Without this self-renunciation and self-devotion to Christ, as an habitual fact, the inner life will be without spiritual power. Jesus, in his promise of the Holy Spirit and of the Christ-presence, makes this the one, essential condition: "If ye love me, keep my commandments, and I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter" (John xiv. 15, 16). A true consecration of self to Christ, therefore, assures the presence of the Holy Spirit as the revealer of Christ within the soul. This was the habitual attitude of the apostle Paul. He says: "The life that I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (Gal. ii. 20). Self was nothing, Christ everything; for when confronted with peril of death, he said: "None of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts xx. 24). Thus self-dedicated he received the promise: the Spirit wrought in him mightily, filling him with divine life and power. So utter was his self-abnegation, and so all-absorbing his love of souls, that, like Moses of old (Ex. xxxii. 32), he "could wish," were it right and would it secure their salvation, to be himself "accursed from Christ" for them (Rom. ix. 3). With like self-devotion to souls, Rutherford, the eminent Scotch minister, while assuring his flock that they "were the

objects of his tears, care, fear, and daily prayers," said, "My witness is above, that your heaven would be two heavens to me, and the salvation of you all as two salvations to me." A ministry thus self-forgetting is of necessity a ministry of power; for God himself works in it, as all history has shown.

IV. An Habitual looking Above for the Reward.—"Godliness" has "promise of the life that now is" (1 Tim. iv. 8); and nowhere, perhaps, is that promise more fully realized than in the pastorate in the present age. In social relations, in opportunities for culture, in friendships formed, in means of influence, in popular estimation, and even in temporal support, few positions in life have higher advantages or more agreeable surroundings. But, with all this, life, even in a faithful ministry, is, on its earthly side, rarely other than a disappointment; and the pastor who seeks reward in human applause or in any form of earthly hope, not only thereby excludes the Holy Spirit from his life, but is also sure to find unrest and failure as the ultimate result. The rewards of the faithful pastor are from God, and are of special magnitude and blessedness.

These rewards come, in part, in the present life. A faithful minister finds them alike in a clear conscience and a sense of the approval of God, and in his work itself and the blessed results following it. With all its care and toil, the ministry, to the man who knows his call of God to the work and devotes himself to it without reserve, is the happiest work on earth. "Sorrowful" he is, "yet always rejoicing." Henry Martyn said: "I do not wish for any heaven on earth besides that of preaching the precious gospel of Jesus Christ to immortal souls. I wish for no service but the service of God in laboring for souls on earth and to do his will in heaven." Dr.

Doddridge: "I esteem the ministry the most desirable employment on earth, and find that delight in it, and those advantages from it, which I think hardly any other employment on earth could give me." Rutherford: "There is nothing out of heaven, next to Christ, dearer to me than my ministry." Brown: "Now, after forty years' preaching of Christ, I think I would rather beg my bread all the laboring-days of the week for an opportunity of publishing the gospel on the Lord's Day than without such a privilege to enjoy the richest possessions on earth." Such is the testimony of godly ministers in all ages, even in periods of bitter persecution. The conscious presence of Christ; the blessed privilege of declaring to guilty men God's rich and free mercy; the delight in the work of saving souls and of ministering comfort and strength and hope to the sorrowing, the weak, and the despairing; the joy of communion with saints,—all these enter into the minister's experience, and give to his work even on earth an unspeakably rich reward.

But the highest reward of the ministry is reserved in heaven. There they will "shine as the brightness of the firmament" "and as the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. xii. 3). "He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal" (John iv. 36). Every soul won to Christ here will there be an occasion of eternal joy. Paul said: "What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even *ye* in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" (1 Thess. ii. 19). Glorious beyond our thought is the reward set before every faithful Christian: he shall receive a "crown of righteousness" (2 Tim. iv. 8), a "crown of life" (James i. 12), "an eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor. iv. 17), and shall "shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of God" (Matt. xiii. 43); and all

this intensified shall be the reward of the true pastor, according as he is faithful to his high calling from God.

Let the pastor, then, seek most of all to be faithful to Christ and his work. Let it be to him "a very small thing that he "be judged" "of man's judgment" (1 Cor. iv. 4), and let him ever cherish as of chief moment a clear conscience, finding his highest comfort in the sweet assurance of God's approval. Be it his to have "respect unto the recompense of the reward," and so endure "as seeing him who is invisible" (Heb. xi. 26, 27). Thus will his life approximate that grandest of merely human lives —the life of him who declared, "As we were allowed of God to be put in trust with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God which trieth our hearts" (1 Thess. ii. 4), and at the close of which it was said, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day" (2 Tim. iv. 7, 8).

When of old, at the Sea of Galilee, the Lord reinstated Peter after his fall, he thrice with solemn emphasis proposed the question, "Simon, son of Jonas, LOVEST thou ME?" He thus taught for all the ages that personal love to him is the primal condition for the sacred office. Without this as the central, fontal principle in the soul the pastor's life will fail of spiritual power, but with this as its impulsive force he will be like the faithful minister seen by Bunyan's pilgrim: he "had eyes lifted up to heaven, the best of books in his hand, the law of truth was written upon his lips, the world was behind his back; he stood as if he pleaded with men, and a crown of gold did hang over his head."

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